

Friday April 10 1998

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Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

The Unique sports magazine

Sport 98

Martin Kettle on the retirement of Michael Jordan after 14 years



Incorporating today's television, radio and European weather

Decca Aitkenhead

Self-destructive weapons don't sleep even on Good Friday

Comment, page 12

Sinn Fein ready to end boycott of Ulster assembly

The moment of truth

Paisley and Adams could be asked to sit in same cabinet

John Mullin and Stuart Millar in Belfast

SINN FEIN is preparing an historic move by taking up seats in any Northern Ireland assembly and ditching its decades-old policy of refusing to participate in the government of Ulster, according to positive suggestions emerging from Belfast last night.

Although the party has filled its one seat in the Irish parliament, it has always viewed any Northern Ireland body as representing British colonialism and Unionist dominance. Sinn Fein takes a different view of local councils, where its elected members play an active part.

Last night Gerry Adams' party was negotiating hard at the Northern Ireland peace talks on the make-up of the assembly, backing the SDLP's preferred option of a power-sharing executive. That would mean Mr Adams and Ian Paisley, the Democratic Unionist Party, which is boycotting the talks, being asked to form part of the same cabinet.

Sinn Fein sources indicated the chances of a deal were in the balance as the midnight deadline approached. But it appeared to be much closer to signing up than had been thought possible at any time since it joined the 22-month negotiations last September.

The speculation has been fuelled by reports in Belfast and Dublin that the IRA has extended its nine-month ceasefire, and taken the first steps to pave the way for Sinn Fein's involvement in an assembly. The party's membership would be required to vote overwhelmingly to change its constitution, but the IRA has given the lead in the past.

Unionists were thought to be prepared to move away from their preferred committee system for running the assembly. In return they wanted guarantees that Sinn Fein would only be eligible for elections once the decommissioning of terrorist weapons was under way.

In an important development last night, David Trim-

ble, leader of the Ulster Unionists, received the backing of his party executive for his approach in negotiations. He was accorded a standing ovation. That left him a free hand as he returned to Stormont.

Bertie Ahern, the Taoiseach, offered a crucial concession to Unionists on the so-called implementation bodies, part of the north-south arrangements. He agreed that these could be set up months after the assembly elections, a move that could allow Unionists to shape them.

There was an upbeat mood at the Stormont talks but deep divisions remained on the key issues of north-south bodies and the make-up of a Northern Ireland assembly. President Bill Clinton's officials have been in constant touch with the Government and talks chairman George Mitchell's staff about progress at Stormont. It was Mr Mitchell, Mr Clinton's close friend, who two weeks ago imposed the midnight deadline.

Despite repeated declarations from the British and Irish governments that the deadline for a deal was "fixed", Mike McCurry, Mr Clinton's press secretary, told reporters in Kentucky yesterday lunchtime: "They are very close but they are not there. They expect the talks to go overtime." The news was quickly relayed back to the parties at Castle Buildings.

The two governments continued to be optimistic, and even John Taylor, deputy leader of the Ulster Unionists, an arch-pessimist, put the chances of success at 50 per cent at one stage. The Alliance Party, the loyalist fringe parties and the Women's Coalition were confident a deal was imminent.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said: "Mr Blair is convinced that the people in there want to do a deal. He feels there is an irresistible force and an immovable object, and the irresistible force will prevail." The immovable object was 800 years of history.

The first sign of a breakthrough came early yesterday when the Ulster Unionists offered the Irish government a compromise proposal to get around the crucial sticking



Watch my lips... Mo Mowlam, Secretary of State, declines to comment yesterday about the talks PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN GILES

point of the powers of the north-south bodies. Dublin was trading over the plan.

As the deadline neared, British officials said that the compromise proposal appeared to be gathering support across the board. But Mr Adams was unhappy after suggestions that the Irish government was preparing to get around the crucial sticking

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Karadzic 'poised to give himself up'

Richard Norton-Taylor and Jon Henley in Paris



RADOVAN Karadzic, the increasingly isolated former Bosnian Serb leader indicted for genocide and crimes against humanity, is preparing to give himself up to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, according to Western intelligence and diplomatic sources.

Mr Karadzic, the most wanted Bosnian Serb, was reported last night to have signalled his willingness to surrender to the Hague tribunal subject to conditions, including guarantees about legal representation.

He has been in indirect contact with the tribunal, which was yesterday holding two Bosnian Serbs, Miroslav Kvocka and Mladen Radic, who were arrested on Wednesday by British soldiers understood to be members of the SAS.

The two men face 33 indictments relating to the infamous Omarska death camp, where Serb forces killed, raped, sexually assaulted and beat Muslim and Croat prisoners. They were seized by British special forces in Prijedor, near the former camp in north-west Bosnia.

The French newspaper Le Monde said yesterday that Mr Karadzic had left his mountain hideout in the Bosnian Serb capital of Pale last November and was in an unidentified eastern European country, possibly Belarus.

French intelligence sources told the paper that Mr Karadzic had already contacted two American lawyers, who are investigating the conditions under which he could appear before the tribunal, and are preparing his defence.

The United Nations special envoy to Bosnia, Elisabeth Rehn, said on Wednesday that

Radovan Karadzic: Bosnian Serb indicted for genocide

Mr Karadzic enjoyed "less and less" support among Bosnian Serbs and would appear before the tribunal "very soon".

Le Monde said contacts between Mr Karadzic and French officers in former Yugoslavia were made "several months ago", when France's General Jean Hainrich, a former chief of military intelligence, was deputy commander of the Nato-led Stabilisation Force (S-FOR). The go-between was an unnamed French colonel who has since returned to Paris.

According to Le Monde, French intelligence believes the former Bosnian Serb army chief, Ratko Mladic, who until recently was most often seen in the American sector near Tuzla, has now also left the region.

Officials at The Hague, who declined to comment on the Karadzic case, said yesterday that Mr Kvocka and Mr Radic — the deputy commander and shift commander at Omarska, where more than 3,000 Bosnian Muslims and Croats were held — would appear turn to page 3, column 6

Prague Writers' Festival 1998

The 8th Prague Writers' Festival presents a selection of fine authors from the Czech Republic and around the world. Meet them at the Franz Kafka Centre, Old Town Square, at 7 pm from 20 to 25 April.

- | | |
|--|---|
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Antigone Katia
Michael March
Josef Topol | City Lights
USA
Australia
USA
Czech Republic |
| Tuesday 21 April
Martin Amis
Brian Patten
Per Olov Enquist
Isabel Fonseca | British Day
Great Britain
Great Britain
Sweden
USA |
| Wednesday 22 April
Pedro Tamen
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Mia Couto
Germano Almeida
Tahar Ben Jelloun
Miroslav Holub | Portuguese-Language Day
Portugal
Brazil
Mozambique
Cape Verde
Morocco
Czech Republic |
| Thursday 23 April
Lilian Faschinger
Robert Menasse
Claudio Magris
Ludvik Vaculik | Austrian Day
Austria
Austria
Italy
Czech Republic |
| Friday 24 April
Robert Creeley
John Banville
Dante Marijanacci
Rhea Galanaki
Mila Hingová
Viera Prokešová
Daniela Fischerová | For Bohumil Hrabal
USA
Ireland
Italy
Greece
Slovakia
Slovakia
Czech Republic |
| Saturday 25 April
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Andrzej Szczępiński
György Petri | Polish Day
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Poland
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The Festival is dedicated to Bohumil Hrabal. Patron: the City of Prague.

For further details, please contact the Prague Writers' Festival Foundation, Staroměstské nám. 22, Prague 1 tel/fax +420 2 24 21 30 30

Who's that in the green anorak, punching the air?



Michael White Political Editor

THE Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, and his fiancée, Gaynor Regan, yesterday made New Labour history when they sacrificed a sure-fire Fleet Street photo-opportunity in favour of Old Labour privacy by staging a dawn raid on Tunbridge Wells register office.

Instead of tying the knot, in what was a second marriage for both Mr Cook and his diary country house at Chevening, near Sevenoaks, Mr and Mrs Cook opted for the register office and what aides

called "a private event free from media intrusion" — 10 days earlier than planned.

To make sure they would evade the Fleet Street paparazzi they also arranged at the last minute not to be married at 3pm yesterday, but before normal matrimonial opening hours, at 8.30am. Building works and a skip outside the door helped spoil any lurking photo-opportunity.

But, while the Foreign Secretary outflanked the media, he was unable to escape the prying eyes of the construction community. Builder Robert Harman saw the party arrive. "It was just the two of them and two men. I think the men were witnesses, although

one of them who was wearing a kilt looked like a minder. Mr Cook was wearing a green anorak-type coat and she was wearing a dark suit."

His colleague, painter Allan Oakeshott, said: "When they came out, he [Mr Cook] punched the air." Ah, incidentally, that remained confidential.

"Robin and Gaynor are delighted to be man and wife. I hope they will be left alone to enjoy the short break they deserve together," said Mr Cook's constituency agent, Jim Devine, understood to be "the man in the kilt".

The wedding party then repaired to Chevening, set in 3,000 prime acres, to cele-

brate. Mr Cook let it be known he would be paying for the food and drink out of his own pocket.

Mr Cook's wife of 28 years, the Edinburgh hospital consultant, Margaret Cook, told Channel 5 News: "No comment, but I suppose I wish them well." Since her dramatic separation on the eve of a family holiday, when the News of the World broke news of Mr Cook's liaison, she has given waspish media interviews about the hopeless immaturity of middle-aged men — and threatened to do more in the weeks ahead.

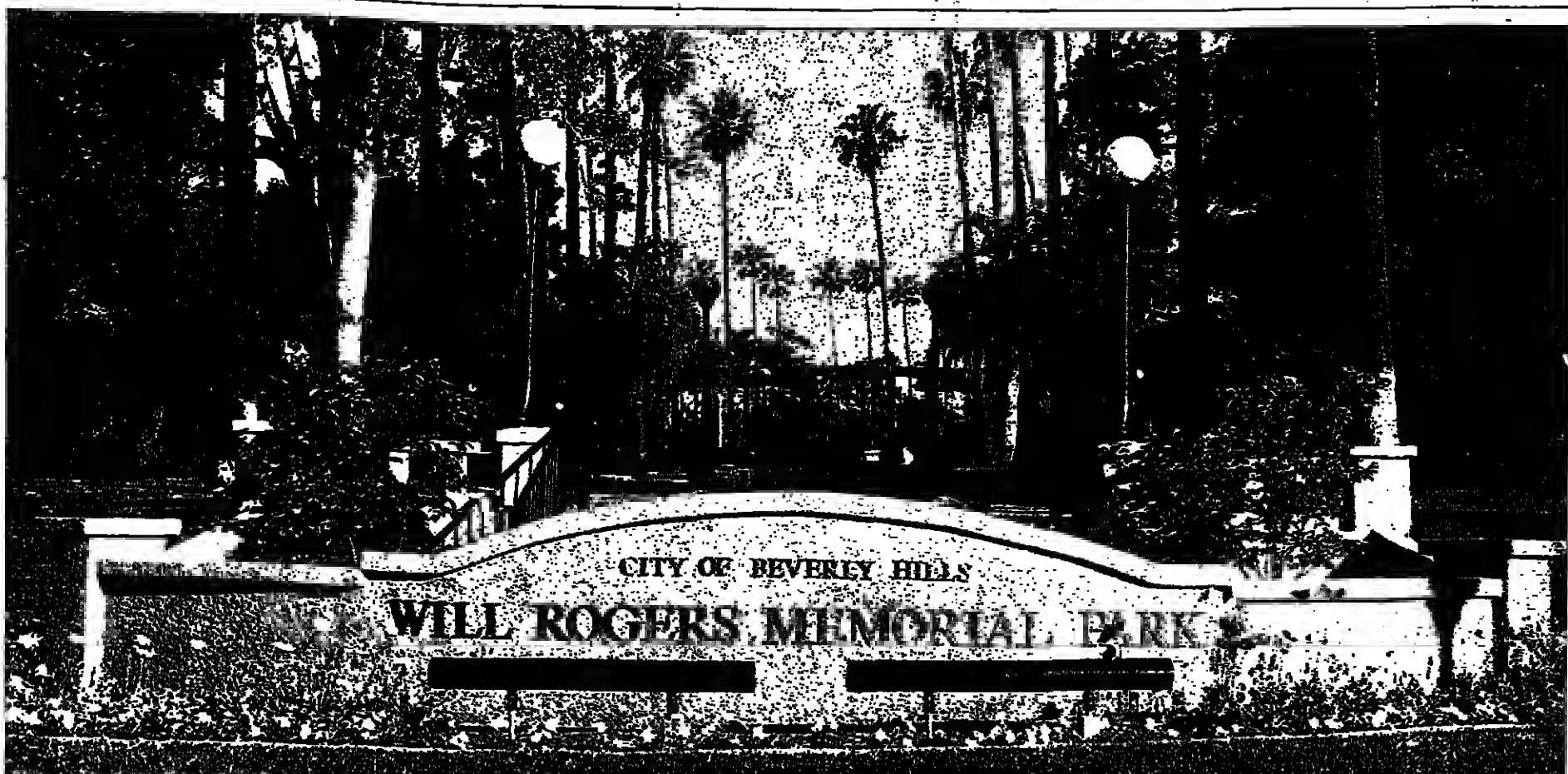
The new Mrs Cook, aged 41, and her husband have also been hurt by media attention,

the criticism they have received — plus the dubious accolade of a Private Eye cover — and the awkward status Ms Regan had on official Foreign Office occasions. She will now accompany him to the Lord Mayor's Banquet on April 23 and to other events in Britain's EU presidency.

Conspiracy theorists at Westminster could not make up their minds whether the Cooks had decided to try to upstage the Northern Ireland peace process or, on balance more likely, to marry while media attention was focused on Belfast.

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Will Rogers Memorial Park in Beverly Hills, where British pop singer George Michael was arrested in the men's lavatory for 'lewd conduct'.

Police deny setting trap for pop star

Christopher Reed
in Los Angeles

B RITISH pop singer George Michael was in hiding yesterday as the circumstances of his arrest in the men's lavatory of a Beverly Hills park remained a mystery amid conflicting reports from the authorities.

There was no sign of the 34-year-old star at his \$3 million home, about a mile from the Will Rogers Memorial Park in this exclusive area of Los Angeles.

He was believed to be staying with billionaire record boss David Geffen, a partner in the DreamWorks entertainment firm with which Michael has signed a recording contract.

Police declined to describe the 'lewd conduct' for which he was arrested. The small park is opposite the opulent Beverly Hills Hotel. The singer was alone when arrested and had not exposed himself to the arresting officer, who was in plain clothes, a police spokesman said.

Lieutenant Ed Kreins of Los Angeles police agreed the park was not a known pick-up place, but somewhere one would 'relax, read a book, or get some wedding photos taken'.

But he said another person had been arrested in the park for lewd conduct earlier that day — thus equalling in one day the arrests in the park for all of 1997. The nearby park known as a gay cruising area



George Michael, believed to be staying with record boss David Geffen.

is called Roxbury. 'We did have complaints about lewd behaviour,' said Lt Kreins, but no complainant has been identified. He added it was a coincidence that an officer had followed the singer into the toilet.

Beverly Hills deputy prosecutor Ellen Aragon denied police had entrapped Michael, or that having arrested him under his real name — Georgios Kyriacos Panayiotou — they were now embarrassed because they had an international incident on their hands.

'Our police deal with celebrities all the time and certainly do not entrap people,' she said. 'Our police are not homophobic and merely seek to protect the innocent from

walking in on an unsavoury act in a public place.' She would drop the case, due in court on May 5, if there was any 'doubt or ambiguity'.

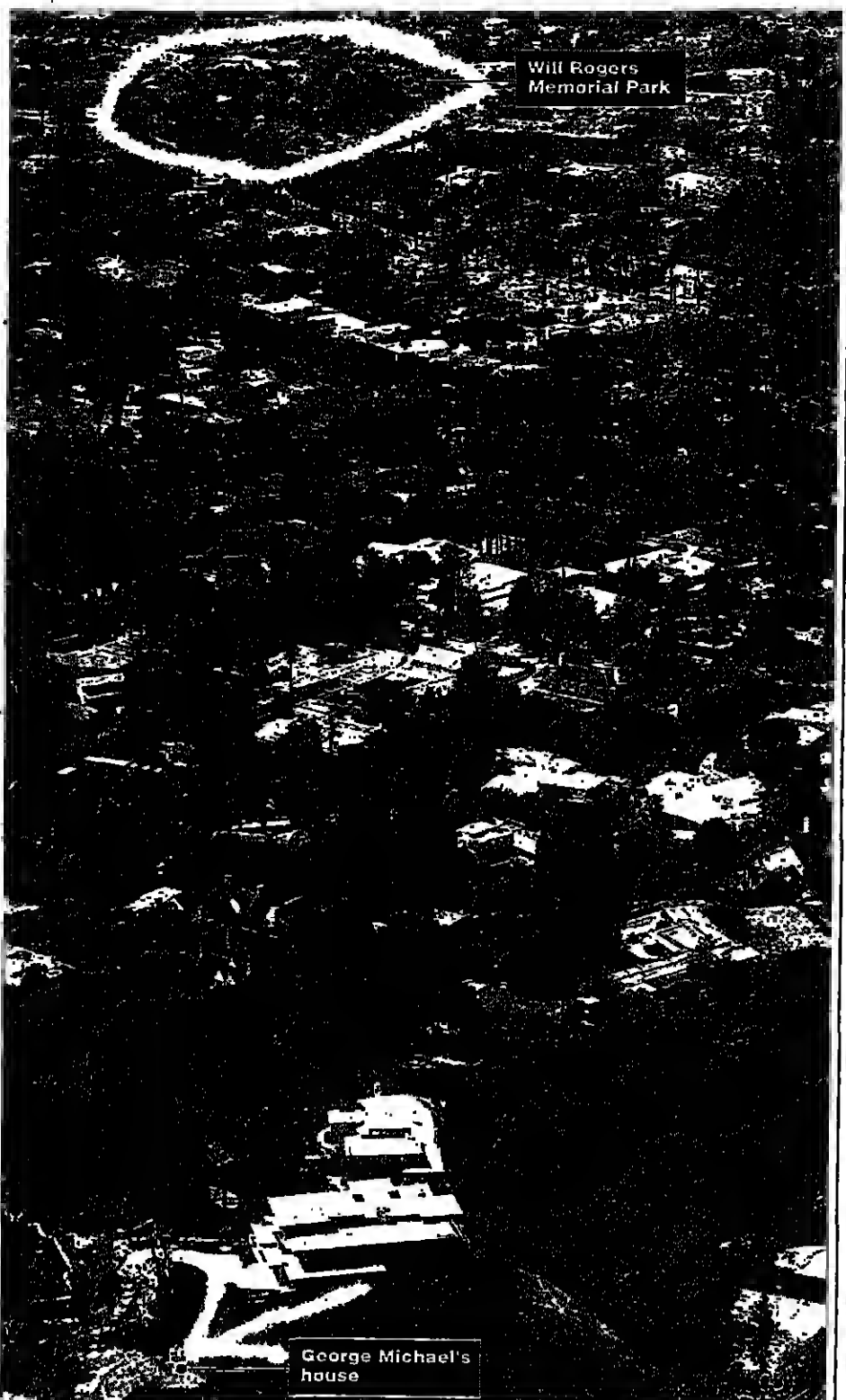
Michael was accused of 'lewd or dissolute conduct' or soliciting such in a public place. But the state justice department was unable to define precisely what 'lewd' meant. 'It could mean anything from indecent exposure to overt sexual activity,' said a spokesman. If Michael is convicted he could be obliged to undergo a course in AIDS education.

Meanwhile, he faces further embarrassment over pictures being offered for sale to the News of the World and the US tabloid, the Globe. The photographs purport to show Michael bare-chested, and visiting a public lavatory with three different men. The editor of the Globe, British-born Tony Frost, said the pictures he was negotiating for had been taken by a fan.

They showed Michael entering and leaving the lavatories, walking bare-chested in the park, and sunbathing at home with a friend, Kenny Goss, aged 36, but they contained 'nothing of an explicit nature'. The News of the World is also believed to be buying the same or similar photographs.

The singer, believed to be worth over \$70 million, has had several hit records since he became famous in the 1980s. One song, I Want Your Sex, was banned by some radio stations.

Leader comment, page 9



Interest rates remain at 7.25pc

Mark Atkinson
Economics Correspondent

THE Bank of England asserted its new-found independence yesterday by refusing to bow to pressure from politicians and industrialists to rule out future interest rate rises.

Despite offering short term relief to homeowners and businesses by leaving rates at 7.25 per cent for another month, the bank's monetary policy committee — given day-to-day control over the cost of borrowing by the Chancellor Gordon Brown last May — failed to indicate its future intentions.

As a result, sterling flinched against the German mark on the foreign exchange market — remaining just under a nine-year high — maintaining the squeeze on exporters.

Mark Geddes, economist at the Dutch bank ABN Amro, said: 'The bias for sterling is maybe a little bit downwards now, but it hasn't fallen out of bed. The market would have to be firmly convinced that British interest rates have peaked for that to happen.'

At the close of the London business day, sterling hovered at DM3.04, indicating that dealers believe that even with interest rates at their current level, the currency remains an attractive bet.

Interest rates in all the other major industrialised countries yield a much lower return on investment than sterling denominated assets. European currencies, especially the mark, are also caught up in uncertainty over the status of the euro due to replace them next year.

A statement from the eight-member monetary policy committee yesterday said simply it had voted to leave rates unchanged. The decision flew in the face of the Confederation of British Industry's call for a signal that rates had peaked

and similar whispered demands from Whitehall.

Mr Geddes said: 'If they had issued such a statement today it would have looked like they were succumbing to political pressure, which is the last thing they want.'

Although Mr Brown has denied trying to second-guess the committee, there have been reports that he and some of his colleagues, notably Education and Employment Secretary David Blunkett, have been frustrated by its indecisiveness which, they believe, is fuelling the pound's rise.

While warning two months ago that rates will probably have to rise again to hit the Government's 2.5 per cent inflation target, the committee has failed to act because of divisions among its members.

It has been reported that Mr Brown wants a substantial indication that rates will soon be heading down, even if it means putting them up first.

His view that higher rates may be necessary is thought to have softened since the Budget which Mr Brown believes has made a substantial contribution towards dampening inflationary pressures.

A vote by four committee members — Charles Goodhart, Alan Budd, Willem Buiter and Mervyn King — in favour of a rate rise in February was blocked by Dame Anne Sullivan, Ian Plenderleith, David Clementi and Eddie George who, as governor, had to vote twice to break the deadlock.

The dispute is thought to have continued at the March meeting. The minutes of yesterday's meeting, delayed by six weeks to avoid disturbing financial markets — come out next month.

The bank's next quarterly inflation forecast, due before May's meeting, is seen as crucial to the path of interest rates. It will contain a more detailed assessment of the economic outlook than the committee's monthly meetings.

Great singing, set in concrete

Review

Tim Ashley

Trittico
Coliseum

THERE'S nothing quite like a good tearjerker. As the curtain fell on ENO's new production of Puccini's *La Traviata* — the second of his three operas — a triptych of one-act operas — there was a scramble for tissues. I was howling along with the rest.

In some respects the performance was Angelica's — and ultimately Trittico's — vindication, particularly as far as British audiences are concerned. The tradition in Britain has always been to split the triptych up. *La Traviata*, a gut-wrenching parable about an Italian aristocrat immured in a convent by her family after she has given birth to an illegitimate son, offended the sensibilities of the nation.

It was usually derided as mawkishly sentimental and Trittico's two other operas, *Il Tabarro* and *Gianni Schicchi*, were frequently performed without it. This production restores the opera to its central position in Britain for the first time since 1920. Done properly, Trittico is overwhelming and ENO cannot be too highly praised for allowing us to hear it complete.

That Angelica succeeds on this occasion, however, is largely the result of the triumph of music over stagecraft. Two of the finest performances to be heard in London for some time — Anne Williams-King as the tormented Angelica and Elizabeth Vaughan as her monstrous, implacable aunt — salvage the piece from some very lacklustre theatricals.

Patrick Mason's direction is frequently unfocused. Joe Vaneke's set, which looks like a pile of concrete, is nondescript. The music is a bit too cute, and there is very little sense of the density of the emotional rot that rubs shoulders with genuine spirituality in the convent.

Despite this, Williams-King and Vaughan, both great singers, manage to tear you apart emotionally, and there is also some wonderful vocalism from the under-valued Elena Ferrari as the gentle Sister Genoveva. The production problems extend to the other two operas. In *Tabarro*, the central relationships are curiously ill-defined, and given that the piece is about the destructive power of human sexuality, much of it is remarkably un-erotic. David Rendall sings beautifully as Luigi but is unusually uncharacteristic. Rosalind Plowright roars her way through Giorgetta's music, making up in decibels what she lacks in subtlety. Philip Joll's tragic Michele, one of the best things he's done, dominates.

Gianni Schicchi is similarly redeemed by a wondrous central performance from Andrew Shore, perfectly judged in comic timing and vocal brilliance. The rest of the singing is not in the same league. Mason's direction is heavy-handed and laboured at times, and the cluttered set irredeemably cramps the characters.

110 Muslim pilgrims trampled to death in Mecca

Jonathan Steele

PANIC ripped through a crowd of more than 2 million Muslim pilgrims on the last day of the annual hajj near Mecca, Saudi Arabia, yesterday, leaving at least 110 trampled to death.

The disaster struck the vast throng, already sweltering in 38C desert heat, as it surged over the half-mile-long Jamarat bridge. Some fell off, and others were crushed in the panic. Most of the victims were elderly pilgrims from Indonesia and Malaysia.

Helicopters had earlier tried to help cool the crowd, hovering overhead to spot pilgrims fainting, while small bags of chilled water were thrown from lorries.

But police using loud speakers may have sparked the tragedy by pleading in Arabic, English, French and Urdu for people to move along quickly. Other police with batons made room for pilgrims wanting to escape the crowds.

The worshippers from more than 100 countries were performing the ritual known as 'stoning the devil', which involves throwing seven pebbles at each of the pillars on the Mina plain three times over three days. Each pillar symbolises one of the temptations of Satan.

The hajj ends with pilgrims circling the Kaaba, a huge cube-shaped structure at the Grand Mosque in Mecca.

Making the pilgrimage is a once-in-a-lifetime obligation for able-bodied Muslims. But it has been marked by several

appalling accidents in recent years as air travel brings unprecedentedly large crowds to the highly charged event.

The Saudi authorities have stepped up safety measures, banning the use of private cooking stoves and erecting tents in well-ordered rows. The Jamarat bridge was widened after a stampede in the same area in 1994, in which 270 people were crushed.

To cope with the crowds this year, the Saudi authorities had commissioned more than 20,000 buses. They set aside 6,000 hospital beds and had more than 10,000 doctors on call.

Dozens of first-aid workers on motorbikes were also on hand yesterday, but could not reach many of the dying in time because of the panicking throng.

Hajj disasters



Fast disasters during the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina:

□ Dec 4, 1978: 75 Sunni Muslim extremists who had taken over the Grand Mosque in Mecca killed in gun battle with Saudi police. Scores of Saudi troops also killed.

□ Aug 3, 1980: Pakistani jet carrying pilgrims caught fire after take-off from Jeddah, killing 301.

□ July 31, 1987: 402 people, mostly Iranian pilgrims, killed and 649 wounded in Mecca when security forces broke up anti-US demonstration.

□ July 9, 1989: Two bombs

in Mecca killed one pilgrim and wounded 16. Iranian-inspired terrorists blamed.

□ July 2, 1990: 1,426 pilgrims killed in a stampede in a pedestrian tunnel.

□ March 21, 1991: 92 Senegalese Muslim troops killed when Saudi military plane crashes after off-season pilgrimage to Mecca. Six-man Saudi crew also killed.

□ May 23, 1994: 270 pilgrims, mostly Indonesians, killed in stampede in Mecca.

□ April 15, 1997: Fires in tent city at Mina killed more than 340 pilgrims and injured 1,500.

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189

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RAILTRACK

The heart of the railway

Grange-over-Sands in Cumbria is just one of the many listed stations currently being restored

سكنى من الامم

Colonel cleared after lurid hearing

'All he wishes to do now is return to the service of his family and of his country'

Lt Col Pople's solicitor



Lt Col Keith Pople leaving the court martial centre at Aldershot with his wife, Brenda, after a military tribunal cleared him of scandalous conduct

'This is simply an affair. Is this really the right court for this matter?'

Lt Col Pople's barrister

Adultery no scandal - court martial

Military tribunal rules officer did not prejudice good army order by sleeping with subordinate. **Rory Carroll reports**

THE army colonel who opened a floodgate of derision after admitting an affair with a subordinate was yesterday cleared of scandalous conduct at the end of a nine-day court martial.

Wearing his newly returned Sam Browne belt and pale blue cap, Lt Col Keith Pople marched out of court, free to resume his duties and rebut claims that he tried to destroy his lover's career.

The five-man military tribunal at Aldershot ruled that he had not prejudiced good order by sleeping with Lt Cdr Karen Pearce, aged 34, while evaluating her work.

Lt Col Pople's solicitor, William Bachs, said: "All he wishes to do now is to return to the service of his family and of his country."

Yesterday's victory prevents Lt Col Pople, a serving officer, selling his story to a newspaper. The option remains open to his reconciled wife, Brenda, who attended each day's hearing. During testimony the 42-year-old father of two praised the virtues of family life and said he took a close interest in

the home lives of those under his command at 4 Regiment Army Air Corps.

He fell in love with Lt Cdr Pearce while sharing a Whitehall office at the Ministry of Defence. Both married, their affair started when he answered her knock on his hotel bedroom door in Naples in November 1993. He wrote her a foot-high pile of letters, cards and poems.

Unfettered by reporting restrictions, newspapers have been able to report every detail of their sexual intercourse, including their "pink friend" - a vibrator.

On the morning of Armistice Day, November 11 1996, they had sex but respected the two-minute silence at 11am.

The affair turned sour after Lt Cdr Pearce was posted to the aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious in April 1996 and began sleeping with another officer, Lt Nigel McTear.

Lt Col Pople claimed he and Lt Cdr Pearce kept their love-making secret under cover of the noise of Harrier jump jets landing and taking off.

Notwithstanding Lt Col Pople's defiance of a superior's order not to speak to his lover again, Admiral Sir Jack

Slater, the First Sea Lord, paid tribute to his former assistant's professional abilities.

Friends said Lt Cdr Pearce was outraged at the ruling and felt mistreated. Although Lt Col Pople admitted adultery, the court martial president, Brigadier Alan Dead, said the panel, after one hour and 40 minutes' deliberation, found him not guilty of conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline and scandalous conduct unbecoming the character of an officer.

Lt Col Pople bowed his head but showed no emotion. His wife, branded a "mouse" by Lt Cdr Pearce, smiled briefly. Earlier the court heard that she had unprotected sex with her husband - their first time in three years - the weekend after he had unprotected sex with his lover, whom he knew to be sleeping with other men.

Lt Col Pople's legal team said the case should never have gone to court martial and could have been dealt with through administrative channels. Rhyddian Willis, defending said: "This is simply an affair. Is this really the right court for this particular matter?"

Lt Col Pople was removed from his £45,000-a-year command in February 1997, and is now a staff officer at Headquarters Land Command, Wilton, near Salisbury.

An army spokesman said he would not return to his old job.



Lt Cdr Pearce: friends said she was outraged

Are courts martial the right way to handle 'social misconduct'? Even the armed services are no longer sure, writes **Clare Dyer**

"Is this really the right court for this particular matter?"

asked Lt Col Keith Pople's barrister, Rhyddian Willis. "Is adultery, or should adultery come to being, a criminal offence?"

Even the most die-hard military disciplinarian must now be asking the same question, after nine days of lurid evidence that can hardly have enhanced the image of the top ranks of Britain's services.

Embarrassing and cringe-making Col Pople's behaviour undoubtedly was, but did it justify the mobilisation of the full panoply of military law? After all, the same court martial which tried him - in effect for adultery and the sort of behaviour that many people have succumbed to in the aftermath of an affair - could equally well have been trying a soldier for a brutal murder.

Courts martial deal with a whole range of military and civilian offences. Their roots are ancient, going back to the need to maintain order when armies travelled far beyond their own national frontiers,

away from civilian courts, and had to take their courts with them.

The need to maintain order and discipline has always been seen as paramount and soldiers have always been able to be tried and harshly disciplined for offences that would not be crimes in civilian life.

In a system analogous to the Crown Prosecution Service, investigations are carried out by military police and a prosecuting authority decides whether the case should go to court.

Though many of the features of civilian justice apply, such as the right to representation and a limited right of appeal, the court martial system has always been more high-handed and draconian than ordinary criminal courts.

The system has come under challenge by former service personnel as a breach of human rights. A court martial system is not a vital adjunct to a military force: the German forces, for example, no longer have military courts or military law.

The European Court of Human Rights in Stras-

bourg has twice found that Britain's court martial process violated the right to a fair trial because those accused were in effect tried by a superior officer rather than an impartial authority. As a result of the Strasbourg challenges, changes were introduced a year ago imposing more of the safeguards which exist in civilian courts.

But only now are the services looking at the whole area of "social misconduct" as part of a review of standards and discipline policy. A spokesman stressed yesterday that this, predicated Col Pople's case, was "in no way connected with the trial" and was unlikely to finish soon.

By tradition, discipline in small things has always been rigorously enforced on the basis that disobedience in the smallest could threaten the maintenance of discipline in big things. Adultery within the military community, along with drinking too much, getting into debt, drug misuse, bullying and harassment are all behaviour which under the military code can amount to conduct jeopardising good order and discipline.

The aim of the review is "to more closely reflect the attitudes of society balanced against the need to maintain operational efficiency", said the spokesman. "No conclusions have yet been drawn."

Drink-driving Dempster's tortuous tale of woe



Nigel Dempster... told of spiked drink and yelling dog

John Eard

IT WAS meant to be a sedate family evening of garlic lamb. But - as Nigel Dempster told it in court - it turned into more of a night of the living dead.

First there was the spiked drink in the fridge, then the screaming dog in the car, followed by "Dante's Inferno" at Hammersmith police station, climaxing in an attempt at "legalised vampirism" at the same venue.

The story was sensational, even from the gossipy columnist of the Daily Mail. But Dempster, aged 56, insisted: "I don't think I am exaggerating."

He was explaining yesterday to West London magis-

trates how he came to be driving while 10 milligrammes over the breathalyser limit - and refused to give a blood sample. He denied a charge of drink-driving.

His day of peril began, he said, with a game of squash. This - plus the lamb at his wife's house - left him thirsty. So he innocently quaffed two pints of orange from his wife's fridge before putting four of his five dogs into his car to drive them for a walk.

Unknown to him, he said, young people in the house had held "some sort of a celebration" earlier. Sadly, they had left the orange laced with vodka, which he did not notice.

In the car, his dog Posy began screaming. While at a

red light, the columnist phoned an emergency vet on his mobile.

Police accused him of speeding, arrested him and took him off to a police station.

"I was confronted with a scene there that was like Dante's Inferno," Dempster said in evidence. "There was a man naked from the waist up spewing blood everywhere. He was of Oriental origin, Malaysian or Chinese."

"I am extremely wary of blood. I can not stand the sight of blood. I was horrified. I was in a panic about my dog. I was getting no sympathy from anyone."

He told magistrates he had then refused to give a blood sample because he had suf-

fered since his teens from Blood Injury Syndrome - fear of needles.

Cross-examined about his reluctance by Adrian Foster, prosecuting, Dempster said: "Why should legalised vampirism be allowed when you can give urine?"

He had refused a roadside breath test because he was panicking about his dog. At no point during the day had he drunk alcohol.

He was found guilty of drink-driving, banned from driving for a year, fined £300 and ordered to pay £300 costs. Penalties were suspended pending an appeal.

Outside court, Dempster declined to comment, saying only - rather late in the day - "Never complain, never explain."

continued from page 1

before the tribunal on Tuesday.

They are charged with crimes against humanity, grave breaches of the Geneva conventions and violations of the laws or customs of war, including criminal responsibility for the torture, murder and rape of prisoners.

The indictment says that in June and July 1992, Mr Radic "took A" to a room... forced her on a table and subjected her to forcible sexual intercourse". It says he assaulted the woman on five occasions.

Mr Kovack's wife told the Agence France Presse news agency that he was arrested by about 30 armed soldiers in three vehicles, which drove

up to their house. The soldiers told him to lie on the ground and handcuffed him.

Javier Solana, Nato's secretary-general, said the arrest was "undertaken in accordance with S-For's mandate which authorises it to detain indicted war criminals who are escorted to the court of its duties".

However, S-For's rules of engagement give soldiers wide discretion. Special forces are used in "snatch" operations.

Seven indicted war criminals have been arrested by S-For troops in the past year, four of them - including Wednesday's - by British soldiers.

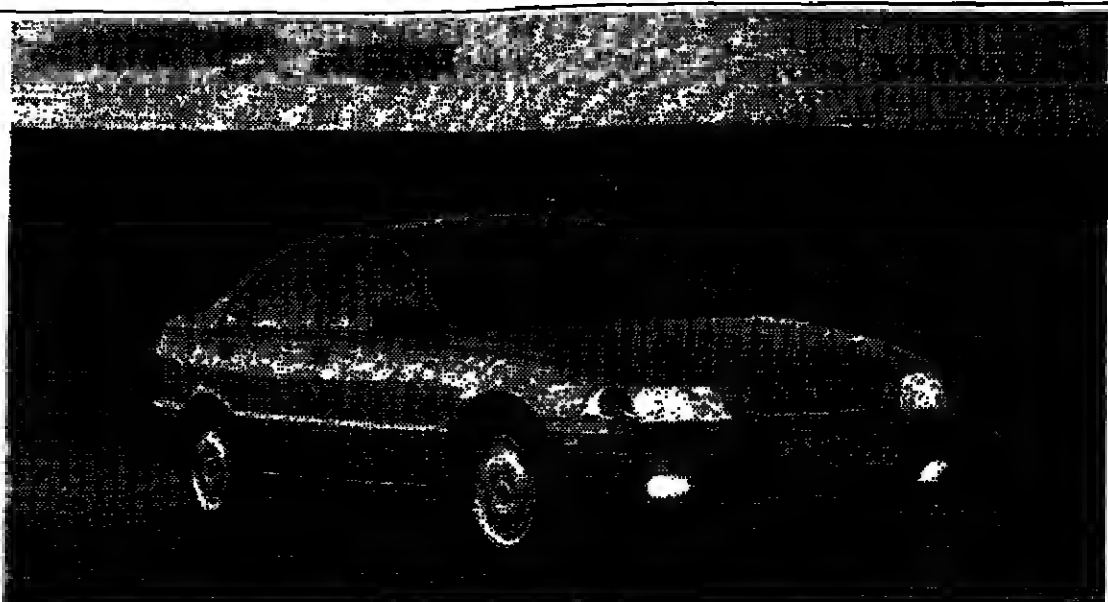
Last July British soldiers, believed to be in the SAS, arrested Milan Kovacevic, a

Bosnian Serb wanted by the Hague tribunal in an incident in which another indicted war criminal, Simo Drljaca, was killed in Prijedor.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, said in a joint statement that the arrests of Mr Kovack and Mr Radic were "a warning to those indicted who remain at large that they will be held individually accountable for their actions. They should surrender voluntarily. They will receive fair treatment at The Hague".

The tribunal now holds 25 indicted war criminals in custody. Two - a Bosnian Serb and a Bosnian Croat - have been sentenced, and five trials are in progress.

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The Queen at Southsea yesterday being greeted by the Very Rev Michael Yorke before the Royal Maundy service at Portsmouth Cathedral. She handed out Maundy silver coins to 72 men and 72 women, reflecting her age on her birthday later this month.



VAUXHALL RECOGNISES VECTRA DRIVERS.

New car registration figures for the first quarter of 1998 show that the Vauxhall Vectra is now the best selling car in its class in the United Kingdom.

This performance continues a pattern of success established since its launch in 1995, including winning a prestigious Fleet award every year since its launch and taking leadership in the retail sector of its class in 1997. Recent launches of the SRi and GSi sports models have broadened the Vectra appeal and have been met with enthusiastic press reviews from the experts at leading journals such as Autocar and Auto Express.

We were therefore disappointed to see that a survey conducted amongst viewers of BBC Top Gear programme by J.D. Power and broadcast on 9th April shows early produced Vectras in a bad light. The survey was based on questionnaires returned by 445 drivers of N-registered Vectras, out of the total 53,000 Vectras sold that registration year.

Vauxhall has a deserved reputation for customer care and has always endeavoured to resolve any product concerns in an honest and straightforward manner. In the case of Vectra we believe any problems encountered in early production cars were handled professionally by Vauxhall and its dealers. If, however, any Vauxhall owners have concerns with their car, then we would like the opportunity of discussing these immediately. You can contact your local dealer or call us direct on 0800 783 7703.

Vectra is a great car competing in a highly competitive market segment which includes many professional buyers of large fleets. We believe this success has come from providing what owners demand - a high quality product at an affordable price. If you want to put that to the test contact your local Vauxhall dealer, who will be happy to arrange a test drive.

We would like to thank all those people who have helped make the Vauxhall Vectra the number 1 car in its class.

Nick Reilly

Nick Reilly
Chairman & Managing Director

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Unions told teachers' red tape will be cut

John Carvel
Education Editor

THE Government is preparing a bonfire of red tape in schools to free teachers from the bureaucratic burden distracting them from raising standards in the classroom.

David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, is expected to put the torch to a mass of unnecessary paperwork when he addresses the National Union of Teachers' conference in Blackpool on Monday.

He wants to head off a threat of industrial strife next term which could blight the Government's attempt to get every school to set improvement targets in national tests and exams.

Stephen Byers, the schools standards minister, yesterday told the teacher unions to call off their action. "When the unions are fully aware of how the Government intends to implement the recommendations of the bureaucracy working group, they will have no reason to take industrial action," he told the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) conference in Bournemouth.

"Classroom teachers are too often diverted into becoming form-fillers and paper-pushers... they must be educators not administrators," he said. "There is no excuse for disrupting a child's education and the Government welcomes assurances from all the teacher unions that... this will not happen."

Earlier this week, the NUT, and the National Association of Teachers and Lecturers (NAL) and the National Union of Women Teachers, whose conference starts in Scarborough on Monday, announced big majorities in ballots for industrial action. Their plan to boycott form-filling was designed as a channel for teachers' grievances against the

Government — especially its decision to phase salary increases, against recommendation by the teachers' pay review body — while keeping parental support.

But head teachers' leaders warned that the boycott could disrupt the Government's programme for schools to set pupil performance targets and draw up an education development plan.

"Any teachers' union that stands in the way of the crusade to raise standards will be condemned, not just by this Government but by parents up and down the country," Mr Byers said.

He defended David Putnam, the Oscar-winning film producer and senior member of the school standards task force, who raised fears about the Government's basic skills campaign at the Bournemouth conference. Lord Putnam had said: "I believe we face a real danger — the danger of allowing arts education to be marginalised... sacrificed at the altar of the primary and literacy targets."

The Government, he added, was right to help every child gain basic skills, but there was a danger that education could diminish to a point where it would start to be seen "as a picture created by painting-by-numbers".

Meanwhile, Peter Smith, the general secretary of the ATL, said that 80 per cent of pupils rejected teaching as a career because of the stress, according to an ATL-published survey, 72 per cent of nearly 4,000 secondary school children were turning their backs on the profession.

Mr Smith said: "A crusade for education can never succeed if it rests on the commitment of underpaid, disillusioned mercenaries." Saying the ATL was moderate, he warned that the profession could often appear like a hedgehog in a snail, permanently in prickly mode.

Pupils 'at risk' of Internet porn

John Carvel
Education Editor

TEACHERS warned yesterday that paedophiles are contacting pupils through e-mail facilities at schools.

Michael Moore, head of information technology at Little Hulton community school, Greater Manchester, said sixth formers at a north-west school received messages from a Sheffield paedophile ring through the e-mail addresses they had been given by their teachers.

Children were only "two clicks away" from pornographic and racist material which could easily be accessed on the Internet, either deliberately, or by accident, he told the Association of Teachers and Lecturers conference in Bournemouth. The pornographers used code to evade attempts to block their material.

He warned that protective measures could not be fool-proof. "When there are 30 children in a class, a teacher cannot stand behind every one of them every minute of the day watching what they are doing. The Government needs to be putting pressure on Internet providers, in this country and abroad, to prevent this material on their sites in the first place."

Other delegates told how Internet searches for subjects covered in the national curriculum — such as the Nazi party — could produce illegal material from far-right groups.

The conference agreed a resolution that schools should be provided with filters to block children's access to text and pictures their parents would not want them to see.

Brian Waggett, from Range high school, Formby, called for more training and a "basic level of protection" for teachers against "legal or other challenges from parents and other bodies".

"As a supposed expert IT teacher, I ought to be able to keep my finger on the pulse of a class, you might think. Well, let me tell you, during a lesson with less than 20 students in a room of 30 computers, I failed to detect several pupils attempting to access some really hairy pornography," he said.

The union might soon find itself defending members charged with negligence in similar circumstances. "Legal opinion might see it otherwise, but I'm pretty sure a governing body will not, if outraged parents produce obscene material their child has downloaded using school equipment," he added.

Stephen Byers, minister for school standards, said the Government was planning a 250 million information technology training package for teachers which would include training on how to identify and guard against offensive material.

British-based Internet service providers had set up an Internet watch scheme which monitored material contained on their sites, but sites based outside Britain posed a problem, he said.

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It is not for gain, says mother granted legal aid to launch negligence claim over rape and killing of teenager on school trip to Brittany

Council sued over holiday murder

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

THE mother of the teenage girl murdered on a school trip to France has brought an unprecedented civil action against the local education authority which organised the holiday.

Last night, Cornwall county council expressed its regret that the action was being brought, but said it did not believe it was legally liable.

Sue Dickinson, aged 40, from Launceston in Cornwall, has started civil proceedings against the council, claiming it acted with negligence and breach of duty in the care of her daughter, Caroline, aged 13.

She was raped and murdered in a youth hostel in Pleine Fougères, in Brittany, in July 1996, while on a trip with 39 pupils and five adults from Launceston community college.

At a press conference in Launceston yesterday, Ian Langford, Mrs Dickinson's solicitor, said that she had obtained legal aid to fight the action, but it was not being brought for her personal gain.

"If she is successful she intends to place any compensation in a trust fund for her daughter, Jenny," said Mr Langford. The girl, aged 13, goes to the school attended by



Caroline Dickinson, murdered at age 13

'Questions have been asked of Cornwall county council on Mrs Dickinson's behalf, but unfortunately the answers were not forthcoming'

Solicitor for Sue Dickinson, mother of Caroline

her sister. "Mrs Dickinson feels that important information surrounding Caroline's murder has not been provided," said Mr Langford. "Questions have been asked of Cornwall county council on Mrs Dickinson's behalf, but unfortunately the answers have not been forthcoming."

Mr Langford said that if Mrs Dickinson's case — which could take two years to be heard — was successful the award would probably not be more than £15,000. The case has been lodged at Bodmin county court under the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1934 and the Fatal Accidents Act 1976.

In a statement yesterday, the county council said it had been advised by insurers that it had no liability, and it regretted that Mrs Dickinson felt it necessary to issue proceedings. "The council has co-

operated fully with the French and English police investigations," said a spokesman.

Mr Dickinson, aged 42, who has put pressure on the French authorities to step up their inquiry into the murder, said yesterday that although he was not a party to the action, he supported his wife.

In February, French police released a photo of a suspect, which drew more than 1,000 calls. The suspect was seen in the area two days before the murder, and the photo was compiled with the help of Caroline's school friends. It was issued after Judge Renaud van Ruymbeke replaced the previous examining magistrate after complaints from the Dickinson family.

Nearly 700 voluntary DNA tests have been carried out in the area.



Sue Dickinson at a press conference yesterday to announce she is suing Cornwall county council over her daughter's death. PHOTOGRAPH: SAM MORGAN MOORE

Cilla 'blackened' in Equity ad dispute

Lucy Patton

CILLA Black, the highest paid woman on British TV, has become caught up in the long dispute between Equity and the advertising industry.

It emerged yesterday that Ms Black, famed as go-between in ITV's *Blind Date*, has been "invited" to resign from the actors' union for strike-breaking in a dispute over repeat fees for voice-overs. Seven other Equity members have also had letters asking them to resign.

Ms Black has done a voice-over for a new series of TV adverts for Safeway supermarkets.

Last night her office complained that the affair had become public before Ms Black had even received her letter from Equity. "We are disgusted with the way this has been blown out of all proportion," a spokesman said.

Equity's secretary general, Ian McGarry, said two members had already resigned because of the letters. He said: "Cilla's manager told us that he was not aware of the union instruction, and that Cilla had always complied with Equity in the past."

"We have written to him to confirm details of that. Obviously, we have to treat all members the same, whether they are just starting out or not."



Cilla Black... 'invited' to resign from the union

"We did not give the matter to the press. I don't know how they got it." He would not reveal the identity of the two members who have resigned. The dispute centres on arrangements for repeat fees for voice-overs.

Equity and the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising drew up a five-year agreement on voice-over rates in 1991. When the two — along with the Advertising Film and Videotape Producers Association — came to renegotiate the contract early last year, the institute said it wanted to make substantial cuts to fees for voice-over actors.

It wanted to pay "non-visual" artists less than "visual

artists' on the grounds that those on screen spend more time making the ad.

Equity then pulled out of negotiations. In September last year, the union instructed its 36,000 members to refuse to do any TV commercials.

Just over two months ago Equity lifted the outright ban, as long as agents checked everyone working on the advert was receiving Equity terms.

Top stars from Chris Evans to Helen Mirren have refused lucrative contracts in the course of the dispute. Actor Steven Berkoff was almost blacklisted when he signed up for a McDonald's campaign in January during the full-blown ban on advertising work.

The actress Prunella Scales said she was "shocked and surprised" at Berkoff's decision and Robert Powell said he was "hugely disappointed".

Tim Pigott-Smith joined the criticism of his fellow actor, saying: "It is just as well he's practised in the one-man show because that may well be all he's left with."

Berkoff replied to the attacks, saying: "I suppose when you are a successful wage-earner, it is easy to breathe your high moral disdain."

But he added: "I don't wish to break their cause and will wait until the dispute is over."

Women 'take' pain better

Sarah Hall

IT IS something women the world over have long suspected — and now it is official: women are more sensitive to pain than men but handle it better.

A study of arthritis sufferers has shown that women experience "significantly higher" levels of pain than men but are more adept at coping with it by using "distracting" strategies.

In contrast, men fail to confront the searing pain — and remain affected by it for longer, the study, conducted by Francis Keefe, of Ohio University, revealed.

The research, presented at a conference on gender and pain in Maryland, was based

on 99 women and 48 men suffering from osteoarthritis who were asked to rate their levels of pain in 20 joints on a scale of nothing to four over 30 days.

Professor Keefe found women reported 40 per cent more pain than men, and said that, while pain was subjective, this could not be attributed to exaggeration. "Women are more likely to report it than men, but I don't think that's the same as exaggeration," he said.

Women tended to regard pain as a call to action, and took measures to overcome the discomfort or to relieve it. These included practical methods such as reducing their levels of activity or relaxing, or "emotional" to-

cused coping" including seeking emotional support, venting their feelings, and even finding comfort in prayer. Men used fewer tactics and to a lesser degree.

The greater ability of women to deal with pain also meant they recovered from its emotional impact far quicker.

"Men are more likely to be in a negative mood than women the day after experiencing pain, which seems due to women's ability to deal with it," said Professor Keefe.

The reasons for different perceptions of pain by the different genders are complex: societal expectations — demanding men retain a stiff upper lip — could play a part, as could psychological and biological differences, said Prof Keefe.

Some sports stars never quite know when or how to call it quits. Others favour the sudden farewell rather than the lingering farewell. The third category neither overstay their welcome nor shock us by their departure. They are popular and able to quit at their peak.

Martin Kettle on the retirement of Michael Jordan

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Watchdog says US firm has cleaned up its act after bribery scandal

Oflot rules Camelot can continue link with GTech

Julia Finch

THE National Lottery operator Camelot was told yesterday it could continue to do business with the computer company at the centre of the recent Richard Branson bribery scandal.

The lottery would have been plunged into chaos if Camelot had been ordered to sever all ties with GTech, which supplies the on-line technology behind the twice weekly draw.

But lottery watchdog Oflot has ruled that the company, dogged by other allegations of malpractice in the US, is "fit and proper" to continue being involved in the UK lottery.

The controversy surround-

ing GTech came to a head in February when the High Court ruled that Guy Snowden, the founder and controlling director of GTech, had tried to bribe Virgin chief Richard Branson into dropping out of the race to run the UK lottery. Mr Snowden was ordered to pay Mr Branson damages of £100,000.

GTech, the biggest lottery company in the world, owned a 22.5 per cent stake in Camelot. After the court ruling Mr Snowden quit as a director of Camelot and GTech, and last week Camelot distanced itself further from the scandal when its other four shareholders bought out GTech's stake for \$51 million.

Yesterday acting Oflot chief John Stoker declared he could find no reason to expel

GTech. "I have concluded... that GTech is fit and proper for its role as a supplier of lottery systems and services to the National Lottery."

He said Camelot's decision to buy out the GTech shareholding had simplified his decision, but the disruption to the lottery that could have been caused by forcing GTech to withdraw was "not a material consideration".

He said he was impressed with how the firm had cleaned up its act in the past few years, and how it had cut its connections with Mr Snowden immediately after the bribery case. He believed GTech's directors were now committed to good practice.

Mr Stoker defended the decision, made by his predecessor Peter Davis, to award the

lottery licence to a consortium that included GTech.

Mr Davis, who had accepted free flights to the US from GTech, was forced to resign in the wake of bribery allegations. But Mr Stoker said: "I don't see that on the knowledge available to him he could have reached a different conclusion."

A spokesman for Camelot said it was pleased with the outcome of Mr Stoker's inquiry, and hoped to put the entire GTech scandal behind it.

A Virgin spokesman said that despite the changes at GTech and within Camelot... the contract remained "a government monopoly to print money" and it should be awarded to a non-profit organisation.

Rewards offered to hospitals for cutting NHS waiting lists

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

THE Government set up a £32 million "performance fund" yesterday to reward health authorities doing the most to cut hospital waiting lists — and to pay for task forces to help those not doing enough.

The move came as a leading health economist warned that patients were waiting longer for treatment and that health Secretary Frank Dobson faced an uphill task to meet his target of cutting the numbers waiting in England by 100,000 before next April.

John Appleby, senior lecturer in health economics at

the University of East Anglia, said a 10-year fall in the number of patients waiting more than a year for treatment, had been reversed by an 18 per cent increase since last March.

No single factor was likely to have caused this, Mr Appleby said. "If anything is to blame, it is probably that the NHS — from ministers down — took their collective eye off the ball," he explained.

Health authorities and hospitals would have to achieve unprecedented results to make "a significant dent" in the country's waiting list of almost 1.3 million patients, Mr Appleby said in an article in the Health Service Journal.

"Even after September 1996, when the health service

treated a record number of people from the waiting list, the number waiting still went up by nearly 100,000 the following March," he said.

Of the extra \$500 million in NHS funding announced in last month's Budget, \$220 million is going towards cutting waiting lists in England to below the 1.3 million inherited from the previous government. Ministers are committed to cutting a further 100,000 by the next general election.

Mr Dobson announced yesterday that \$288 million of the English money would be distributed among health authorities to help them reach agreed waiting-list targets, and \$32 million held centrally in a performance fund.

The fund would be used to give individual authorities further sums or "rewards" of up to 10 per cent of their initial allocations, if they exceeded their targets.

It would also be used to fund remedial action by regional waiting-list task forces in authority areas falling below their targets.

"That could include sending into health authorities and NHS trusts teams of managers and clinicians with a proven track record of cutting waiting lists," he said.

Authorities have until April 24 to agree on their action plans for cutting waiting lists. The \$288 million will then be shared out between them.

Times change at the Bar as 10 of 60 new QCs are women

Claire Dyer, Legal Correspondent

AN UNPRECEDENTED number of women have won the title of Queen's Counsel, Lord Irvine's first list of QCs as Lord Chancellor includes 10 women out of 60 lawyers chosen.

Only 46 of this year's 511 applicants were female, despite the Lord Chancellor's exhortation in speeches to women and ethnic minority lawyers: "Don't be shy — apply." However, women's success rate was 21.7 per cent, compared with 10.7 per cent for men.

No-white applicants were

even more successful, with four appointments out of 18 applicants.

Only one new QC is a solicitor, joining the first two appointed last year.

The title QC is granted to those reckoned to be the top 10 per cent of the Bar in ability, particularly in advocacy. They are known as "silk",

because they wear silk, rather than stuff, gowns, and can charge high fees.

Lincoln Crawford, chairman of the Bar's race relations committee, said the list "will go a long way to restore the confidence of minority lawyers who have virtually given up the idea of ever applying".

News in brief

Woman to head inspectorate team

A FORMER hospital social worker was yesterday appointed the Government's chief inspector of social services, the first woman to hold the post. Denise Dineen, currently head of social services at the Local Government Association, will take up the new job in July on the retirement of Sir Herbert Laming.

Ms Platt, aged 53, is known to believe that social services departments need to adapt to survive, possibly forsaking their independence from other council functions such as housing and community services. She said in a statement: "I look forward to working with the Government on its vigorous social services agenda." — David Brindle

Life for 'have a go' killing

THREE burglars were yesterday given life sentences for stabbing to death a householder who chased after them after they ransacked his house.

Alan Naylor, aged 27, Wyndham Thomas, 21, and Christopher Chislett, 18, all from Croeserw, South Wales, were found guilty of murder and aggravated burglary. Swansea crown court had heard how Christopher Williams, aged 23, a champion cross-country bike rider, was able to outrun the three when he caught them at his terraced house in Nanhyfyllon, Kidlington, in July last year. His pregnant partner, Melanie Hicks, aged 24, was asleep with their daughter, Lauren. She had not locked the front door because she was expecting him to come late.

Freemasons go public

FREEMASONS are to lobby to try to block plans to set up a register of police officers, judges and prosecutors who are masons. The Home Secretary, Jack Straw, was acting in an "oppressive and arbitrary manner [and] without valid reason," said Gavin Purser, president of the board of general purposes of the United Grand Lodge — masonry's governing body.

Writing in Freemasonry Today, Mr Purser said masons had to change the public perception that some "sinister purpose" lay behind their reluctance to admit who was a member. "We should all be proud to be masons."

Fantastist jailed

A FANTASIST who made himself a murder suspect was jailed yesterday for four months at Exeter crown court.

Steven Palmer, aged 30 and unemployed, admitted wasting police time. He had repeatedly approached police hunting for the murderer of Kate Bushell, aged 14, brutally killed near her home in Exeter in November. The murderer has yet to be found.

Mother charged over fatal fire

A WOMAN was yesterday charged with wilful fire-raising over a blaze at her home in Kilwinning, Ayrshire, last Friday, in which her seven-year-old twins died. Jane Miller, aged 31, appeared in private at Kilwinning sheriff court. She made no plea and was remanded to hospital.

Close call for Ronnie

GUITARIST Ronnie Wood escaped unhurt yesterday when a pleasure boat caught fire off Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

Along with others, the 50-year-old was rescued by a boat-load of photographers accompanying the Sex American leg of the Rolling Stones' Bridges to Babylon tour.

Danger from poultry feed covered up, says Currie

James McKie

EDWINA Currie, who resigned as junior health minister during the 1998 salmonella-in-eggs scare, yesterday accused the then government of trying to "shut her up" and cover up the problem.

She claimed that colleagues had found it easier to "slaughter the minister" rather than the hens when she announced that most of eggs produced in the country were infected with the bacteria.

Mrs Currie, speaking after government food safety advisers expressed concern that the incidence of salmonella in eggs had changed little between 1991 and 1996, said the number of people dying from food poisoning caused by salmonella had fallen from 60 or



Edwina Currie... she was 'easier to slaughter than the hens', she claims

70 a year to about 30.

"But the problem is still there," she told the Today programme on BBC Radio 4.

"We probably compensated the wrong people. We compensated those farmers who went out of business instead of taking out in a really aggressive way — as we did once with foot and mouth disease — the infected flocks and making sure those infected farms were properly set up again with clean flocks."

"It was all done to cover up. It was all done to shut me up and that's not the way you tackle food safety or consumer safety issues."

She said later: "I suspect the wrong chickens were slaughtered. It would have required the government to act ruthlessly to tackle the problem but... it was much easier to slaughter the minister."

In 1991 researchers from the Public Health Laboratory Service found that one in every 650 eggs contained salmonella. The virulent strain of salmonella enteritidis, which caused the scare, was present in one in every 1,320 eggs. New, unpublished, figures are thought to show that about one in every 700 eggs contained salmonella bacteria in 1996.

Although 2 million birds were slaughtered between 1993 and 1996, the problem persisted.

British Egg Industry Council chairman Andrew Parker dismissed Mrs Currie's claim that some chicken feed might still contain ground-up chicken remains and insisted that the practice had stopped about 10 years ago.

Pensioner dies after brutal attack in raid on his home

David Ward

POLICE yesterday appealed for help in tracing a killer who stabbed a pensioner 18 times in a raid on his home.

Carlos Bennett, aged 65, died a few hours after being attacked by the intruder he discovered in his bungalow in Moss Side, Manchester, in the early hours of Wednesday.

Before he died from multiple injuries in Manchester Royal Infirmary, Mr Bennett described the man who had repeatedly lashed out with an eight-inch knife he took from

a workshop in the kitchen.

Chief Superintendent Peter Stelfox, who is leading the investigation, said the pair struggled through all four rooms of Mr Bennett's home, leaving a trail of blood.

"This is a savage attack on a man living alone who bravely defended himself against a man armed with a knife," Mr Stelfox said.

Mr Bennett's daughter, Angela, of Old Trafford, Manchester, said: "He was a good father and he loved his grandchildren to bits. He was well known in the community and well respected."

New wave of thefts hits fashion houses

Amelia Gentieman

FASHION thieves struck again twice in London yesterday, fuelling industry fears of a wave of industrial sabotage.

The entire collection of swimwear designer Liza Bruce and clothes by Caroline Charles, worth £30,000, were stolen early yesterday morning, bringing to four the number of leading designers targeted in less than a week.



Designs by Liza Bruce (top left)... she last showed a collection in 1995

heap. This was a deliberate attempt to damage me."

Thieves broke through the glass door of her flagship store on Port Street, behind Harvey Nichols, at about 4am.

A man was seen loading swimwear and other clothes into a dark saloon car outside the shop, before driving away with the headlights switched off.

"We're devastated be-

cause we had only opened the store six weeks ago and were just beginning to build up a relationship with our clientele," Bruce said.

PC Dries Hayoukane of Scotland yard, who is investigating yesterday's robberies, said: "We are not connecting the two crimes yet. There is often an increase in this kind of crime at this time of year, when designers put out their new

lines. There is obviously a demand for the clothes."

Robert Zerman, director of the Joseph Azagury shoe company, which has had designs stolen, said: "It's a huge risk which designers should be far more aware of. It's very easy to have designs reproduced quickly, cheaply and in huge quantities in the Far East — which can have a devastating effect on business."

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Defence secret unveiled



Something in the air... curator Ian Smith samples the atmosphere of the radar room in the Hack Green bunker, near Nantwich, which opens as a museum today. PHOTOGRAPH BY BRUCE ADAMS

Cold war nuclear bunker gives all clear to sightseers

Sarah Hall

FOR 50 years, the nuclear bunker at Hack Green, in the heart of the Cheshire countryside, has been shrouded in secrecy, its existence only

known by a classified few, and its contents barely guessed at. But today, the mysteries of the once top secret building are unveiled. It is being opened as a museum, and for £4.80 (£2.80 for children) visitors will be able to explore the

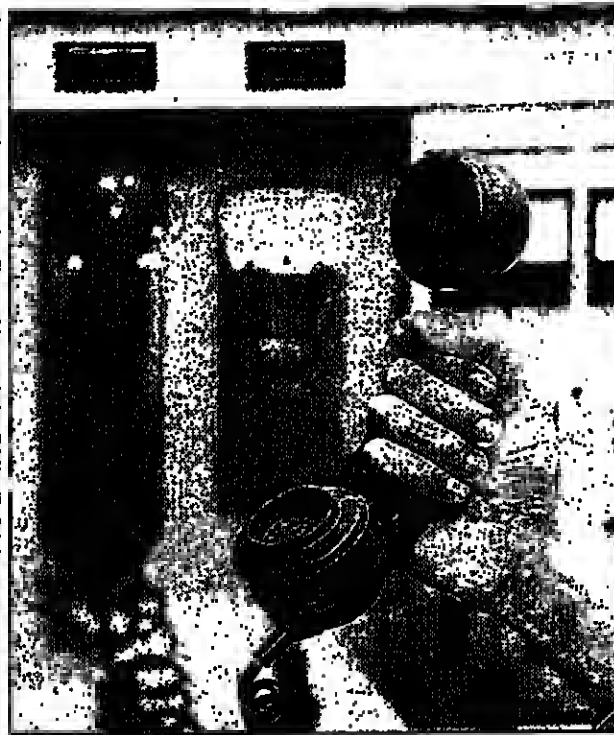
den that would have served as a regional "nerve centre" during a nuclear attack, perhaps in a third world war.

The museum, three miles from Nantwich, near Crewe, claims visitors will experience life as led by the

135 military personnel who spent up to eight weeks cramped in the partly-subterranean building. Sound effects and a "four-minute warning" will generate a suitable sense of terror, and various rooms, including a dormitory, sick bay and radio room, have been refurbished.

Emergency announcements will be played from the basement by the War-time Broadcasting Service, and there will be stalls and videos outlining the history of radar and the job of the Royal Observer Corps.

The 30-room bunker, as deep as 20 feet and with walls five feet thick, began life in 1953 as a radar station and was converted in 1979 for about £32 million. Throughout the 1980s it was one of 20 regional headquarters designed to co-ordinate the country in an attack. But in 1983, with the cold war over, the Home Office sold it; it went to the private communications firm Omnicorps — at a fraction of the original cost.



Direct line: an early-warning phone in the radar room

Population Estimate as at 21214hrs. D+7 date

DISTRICT	SURVIVING POPULATION	REFUGEES	TOTAL	REMAINS
WARRINGTON				
WARRINGTON				
LYNN				
DISTRICT TOTAL				
HALTON				
WIDNES				
RUNCORN				
DISTRICT TOTAL				
ELLESMERE PORT				
ELLESMERE PORT				
NESTON				
DISTRICT TOTAL				
VALE ROYAL				

A damage report chart to show the tally of survivors and refugees after a nuclear attack

£450,000 for victim of police

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

A JURY yesterday awarded a taxi driver who had been assaulted by police a record £450,000 in damages. The award comes only two days after a similar amount in a police assault action was heavily reduced by the Court of Appeal.

A jury at Liverpool county court yesterday made the award to George Randles, aged 52, after hearing evidence that he had been assaulted by the police following his arrest in 1989.

Mr Randles, from Stockbridge, Merseyside, was awarded £300,000 exemplary damages, £100,000 aggravated damages, £40,000 for post-traumatic stress, and £3,500 for his physical injuries.

The incident which provoked the action took place in the Halewood area of Merseyside on Easter Sunday, 1989. Mr Randles, who has five children, claimed that he was driving his taxi when he was asked to stop by officers.

There was a dispute between Mr Randles and the police, during which, Mr Randles told the court, he was kned in the groin by one officer, shoulder-charged, pushed to the floor and punched about the head.

"He was punching me in the face and I was losing consciousness," he said. "Then I heard a voice saying 'That's enough' and I felt the weight come off my chest."

He told the court that another officer had intervened. Following the incident, Mr Randles was convicted at a magistrates court of threatening behaviour but cleared of assault.

He later brought an action for damages, alleging wrongful arrest, false imprisonment, malicious prosecution, and assault. During the case, Judge Ian Trigger dismissed all the claims, except for those concerning assault.

A spokesman for Merseyside police said yesterday: "The chief constable [Sir James Sharples] is very disappointed at this decision of the jury and the award of damages."



George Randles: told of being kned in the groin

The spokesman added that leave had been granted for an application to appeal. No money would be paid before completion of the appeal.

"These awards seem to be out of all proportion to the incident and apparently out of step with similar cases," said the spokesman. "It should be noted that Mr Randles, who was convicted of a criminal offence as a result of this incident, failed in his claim for false imprisonment, malicious prosecution and malfeasance."

After the decision, Mr Randles said: "I am here for justice. I did not want a shilling. I was fit and strong — a weaker man may well have died."


His solicitor, Julian Linskill, said: "My understanding is that in this kind of case, the previous highest payment by a police force was £302,000. Mr Randles is thrilled with the decision."

On Tuesday, the Court of Appeal reduced the damages awarded to Danny Coswell, aged 30, who had been awarded a record £302,000 in an action against the Metropolitan police in 1996.


Mr Coswell had been hit on the head with a truncheon in 1990. His damages were reduced to £47,000 this week and he was ordered to pay police costs of £5,000.

Lawyers representing clients in civil claims against the police say that only by awarding such large amounts can juries indicate their disapproval of police behaviour.

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Suharto risks births crisis

Indonesia's worst slump for three decades is destroying its population control project

Andrew Higgins
in Pandeglang,
West Java, Indonesia

HALF an hour by foot from the nearest dirt road, wood huts scattered around fields of rice are a universe away from the haggling in Washington and Jakarta between the International Monetary Fund and the technocrats of President Suharto.

Villagers have no electricity and only small battery-powered radios to convey Asia's economic turmoil.

They did not need the radio to tell them something was seriously wrong. The obstructions of economists had already taken brutal form: the body of a young mother.

Villagers blame the death on a crude birth control device — a cheap, long-lasting substitute for the injections and other forms of family planning that are now too expensive. The fact that no one else fell ill made no difference. Panic pays no heed to probability. Village women want out of the government's birth control programme.

Across Indonesia the col-



Pandeglang, West Java

lapse of the national currency, the rupiah, against the dollar and the colossal debts of corporations is undermining the lives of ordinary Indonesians. The twin pillars of President Suharto's legitimacy as Father of Development — adequate food supplies and birth control to limit the number of new mouths to be fed — are crumbling.

Most of Indonesia's 202 million people have never seen a dollar and are baffled by billboards across the country saying "I love the rupiah".

Nonetheless, all have fallen victim to a global economy guided by forces they neither see nor understand. The soybeans that provide a national staple known as tempe are mostly imported, as are contraceptives and drugs.

"We don't know what they are talking about when they talk about the monetary crisis. All we know is that prices keep going up," said Ii Tazkiyah Tawil, a village teacher, family planning counsellor and part-time employee at an Islamic bank.

"Officials talk about getting rid of poverty. But they talk about it sitting in air-conditioned rooms or fancy cars. They do not know what it is like to live like this."

The United Nations has warned that at least 7.5 million people could soon face food shortages, reporting that many already suffer acute lack of supply. Most at risk are remote areas hit by the worst drought in decades, such as Irian Jaya and parts of Borneo.

Even on Java, the country's rich agricultural heartland, many are hungry because they can no longer afford rocketing prices for basic imported foodstuffs. Food riots

have broken out, mostly targeted at ethnic Chinese controlling most commerce.

President Suharto, ensconced in Jakarta and too feeble to travel to London last week for a summit of Asian and European leaders, has acknowledged the pain, but resisted reform of a state food import agency that enriches his youngest son, Tommy, and various cronies. In a statement read to 27 regional governors last week, he said: "Even mothers can no longer be provided with powdered milk for their babies."

Indonesia yesterday agreed with the IMF a wide-ranging package of measures to revive the economy, but details will not be announced immediately, officials said. Government officials and IMF sources said the co-ordinating minister for the economy, Ginandjar Kartasasmita, would announce the memorandum of understanding either today or on Monday.

Sources said it contained precise target dates for implementation of key measures including new laws on bankruptcy and against monopolies, a special court to cover bankruptcy proceedings, and a framework to resolve the

\$74 billion in private foreign debt. The government was expected to announce a privatisation programme and accelerated bank restructuring, the sources said.

But it will be hard to reverse the effects of the *Krismon*, the country's worst economic crisis in three decades.

'For women, sex is seen as a duty ... they have no right to refuse'

which has triggered soaring inflation and doubled unemployment to about 10 per cent of the workforce of 90 million people.

Indonesia's state family planning agency, architect of one of the world's most successful birth control campaigns, is running out of supplies to prevent a population explosion. Most women must pay and many are deserting the programme because charges are now too high.

Private organisations that once filled gaps left by the state can offer little help. The

Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association has stopped ordering depo-provera, a widely used birth control drug, after yet another price rise last week.

Lies Marcos-Natsin, co-ordinator of an Islamic organisation involved in family planning, said domestic abuse was rising because women who can no longer afford contraception try to control the timing of sex. "They want to control their bodies, but their husbands don't have any patience. For women, sex is seen as a duty. They have no right to refuse. They don't want to have any more babies, but they have no choice."

Abortion is technically illegal but widespread. Trained doctors are too expensive, so many women resort to *dukun*, traditional healers who try to induce miscarriage through a potent and sometimes dangerous mix of herbs and wine. The woman who died in the village near Pandeglang may herself have been the victim of a botched termination, though friends insist she was killed by the new birth control method.

Either way, the *Krismon* is being held responsible.



A security man gives the world a straight look from his lopsided sentry-box on the Oriental Plaza building site in central Beijing where work, delayed by a dispute with McDonald's, is finally under way. PHOTOGRAPH: GREG BAKER

Australian PM set to call poll over land rights

Christopher Zinn
in Canberra

AUSTRALIANS face the prospect of an election focused on Aboriginal issues after the senate refused to endorse a federal bill to curtail native land rights.

The upper house's rejection on Wednesday of prime minister John Howard's 10-point plan on native title gives him the trigger to dissolve both houses of parliament and go to the polls.

It will be the first federal election to be fought largely on Aboriginal policy and follows a High Court ruling that Aboriginals may make land claims on pastoral and mining leases.

The so-called Wik decision, named for the Queensland tribe that won the action two years ago, has dominated federal politics for the past year.

Mr Howard is likely to call the poll — labelled a race-based election by the opposition Labour party — by October 29.

Opinion polls suggest his Liberal-National Party coalition government will win, but the Wik debate has polarised the country, pitting the urban majority against those in the bush who have the most to lose.

A senior Aboriginal negotiator, Lois O'Donoghue, said: "From today onwards this is no longer the Native Title Amendment Bill. It is the colonial title amendment bill."

Gatji Djerrkura, the head of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, threatened to resign. "It seems we can have no faith in the government to protect our existing rights," he said.

The Wik issue comes after a High Court decision five years ago which overturned the legal doctrine used by the first settlers to claim Australia for the British Crown in the 18th century.

The newly recognised na-

tive title to land was celebrated by the then Labour government, but finding a politically acceptable way to share land has proved difficult.

Some outback cattle and sheep station owners have found their way to the subject of conflicting claims from Aboriginal groups, some of which they say are unknown to them.

And the mining industry



Gladys Tybingoomba, a Wik elder, leads an Aboriginal delegation from the senate.

says uncertainty caused by the debate is affecting the whole resources sector.

One of the enduring images of the debate was the traditional dance for joy a Wik elder, Gladys Tybingoomba, performed outside the court after the original decision.

This week she left Canberra disappointed. "Today, to the whole of the world, especially to the nation of Australia, I say this to you on the Wik debate of the 10-point plan. It's come to a disgrace."

Dapper Islamist cuts revolutionary cord

With a fragile peace deal in place in Tajikistan, a former rebel leader is embracing democracy, writes Claudia McElroy in Dushanbe

NEATLY groomed and wearing a tweed suit, the mild-mannered figure of Hail Akbar Turajonzodah appears strangely at odds with the image painted by his detractors — that of a dangerous zealot plotting to engulf Tajikistan in Islamic revolution, thereby destabilising the rest of Central Asia.

Recently returned from five years of exile in Iran, from where he organised Islamic resistance against the pro-communist regime in Dushanbe, the charismatic and controversial Muslim scholar-politician is now deputy prime minister, in accordance with a peace agreement signed in June. Although the accord officially ended five years of civil conflict which killed an estimated 50,000

people, the future of Central Asia's poorest republic remains uncertain.

With his stony-faced bodyguard keeping vigil, Mr Turajonzodah hinted at his vision of the future Tajikistan. "I believe that in the future Islam will help to solve the social and moral problems in our country. We have a clear programme, but we will pursue it only through democratic means," he said, refusing to declare his manifesto until nearer parliamentary elections scheduled for later this year.

"It is naive to ask whether we will take the Iranian model of Islam. There are many different kinds of Islamic states in the world and we have our own model."

Whatever his particular brand of Islam, Mr Tura-

jonzodah has spent a lifetime formulating it. Born into what he describes as a "pious" family, he trained in sharia law in Uzbekistan and Jordan and was appointed to the Muslim Spiritual Directorate of Central Asia.

Through his own organisation, the Kaziat (Muslim administration), Mr Turajonzodah co-ordinated the rise of Islamists and Tajik nationalists against the Soviet authorities in the late 1980s and early 1990s, capitalising on the Soviet debacle in Afghanistan as well as the deteriorating economy at home.

When civil war broke out in Tajikistan in 1992 and Moscow, as well as secular Uzbekistan, boosted the Islamist Revival Party and other opposition groups were again forced underground. Their leaders fled to Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan from where the struggle was co-ordinated.

Although Mr Turajonzodah's much-publicised return to Tajikistan in February was seen as a posi-

tive step towards reconciliation, the peace agreement is lagging far behind schedule.

Unresolved issues include the power-sharing agreement between the government and the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), the reintegration and disarmament of UTO fighters and the legalisation of UTO political parties and the mass media.

At the same time an upsurge in violence by opposition groups, renegade militias or criminal gangs has dealt the peace process a serious blow.

The government blames the UTO for the attacks, mainly against military checkpoints and government buildings. "Of course these are the intentions of the UTO," said Zafar Saidov, a spokesman for President Imomali Rakhmonov. "If the UTO leader fails to bring these groups under control we must ask how sincere they are in their proclaimed aim of achieving peace in our country."

The clash of secular and Islamic ideologies appears to be the source of government disunity. "According to our constitution the concept of secularism is inseparable from democracy and legality," Mr Saidov said. "The government and the UTO have fundamentally different viewpoints on this matter. Unfortunately we still have not received any official

declaration by the UTO regarding their intentions. This will obviously have a negative effect on the issue of government reform."

Mr Turajonzodah insisted an Islamic revolution was not on his agenda. "We don't want Islam through bloodshed in Tajikistan," he said. "We want to win the elections through democratic means."

'I don't want Islam through bloodshed. I want to win the election'

Extremism exists only where democracy is not allowed to prevail. "But in a country devastated by the civil war — which caused a fifth of the 5.6 million population to flee their homes — the priority for most Tajiks is survival rather than religious dogma."

There is little sign of any swing towards fundamentalism among the almost exclusively Sunni Muslim population.

"Personally I distrust all politicians in this country — whichever side they're on — because they never keep the promises they make," said a teacher in Dushanbe.

"I'm afraid it is only a matter of time before Tajikistan becomes an Islamic state, and it probably won't happen peacefully, especially if the Russians [peacekeeping force] leave."

"We lived for 70 years under Soviet rule, and if there's one thing the Tajik people have learned it is that the will of the people does not seem to count for much."

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Yeltsin gamble set to backfire

James Meek in Moscow

BORIS Yeltsin's high-risk strategy for self-preservation is in danger of collapse as a crushing parliamentary defeat looms today for his young prime ministerial nominee, Sergei Kiriyenko, focusing attention on the president's own responsibility for Russia's economic stagnation.

Mr Yeltsin will have two more chances to offer Mr Kiriyenko to the lower house, the Duma. But the longer Russia is without a government, the longer its people will have no one to blame but the head of state for silent factories and unpaid wages.

Yesterday's national day of action against the wages crisis drew between 2 million and 5 million protesters on to the streets, according to Moscow television.

In cities where the turnout was impressive — for example St Petersburg, starved of defence orders, and Kemerovo in the stricken Siberian

coalfields of the Kuzbass — last year's calls for the government to resign were replaced by demands for Mr Yeltsin himself to step down.

Aman Tuleyev, the moderate leftwing governor of Kemerovo region, said it was time for a change of direction. "We've done nothing in seven years of reform except destroy and steal," he said.

Mr Yeltsin is fond of blaming ministers he has just appointed for policy failures — such as army reform and the unpaid salaries bill. Russian workers are owed almost \$8 billion in back pay.

But by sacking the prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, and his entire cabinet, he has left himself isolated and exposed until he can get the Duma to approve a new team of potential cabinet scoundrels.

The surprise beneficiary of Mr Yeltsin's shock decision has been Mr Chernomyrdin, who celebrated his 60th birthday yesterday amid wall-to-wall television coverage of a procession of gift-bearers and well-wishers.



An elderly couple in Moscow inveigh against the Russian government yesterday during a national day of protests prompted by the wages crisis

PHOTOGRAPH BY SERGEY CHIRIKOV

Mr Chernomyrdin, whose plan to run for president in 2000 has been endorsed by powerful members of the business elite, had the satisfaction of being congratulated personally by Mr Yeltsin and Mr Kiriyenko, giving him the appearance of a kingmaker.

The scale of Mr Kiriyenko's defeat today is in doubt but Duma leaders were unanimous yesterday that he would

not win approval, however persuasive his keynote speech. "He'll be lucky to get 30 votes," said Nikolai Khartov of the Agrarian party.

Alexander Shokhin, leader of Mr Chernomyrdin's Our Home Is Russia party, said Mr Kiriyenko might muster the support of a third of the Duma's 450 deputies. He needs more than half to pass.

Yellow curtains were being

ironed and plywood frames hammered into place in the parliament building yesterday as booths were set up to enable a secret ballot. Normally deputies vote in view of television cameras by slotting cards into an electronic reader and pressing a button.

Determined that no member of his party should suffer a crisis of socialism in the privacy of the booth and vote for

Mr Kiriyenko, a hardline economic liberal and former commercial banker, the communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov, said his party would refuse the ballot papers — in effect meaning his 134 deputies will abstain from voting.

"[Kiriyenko] has no realistic programme, no team, no experience, no knowledge, and choosing him would only make the situation in the

country worse," Mr Zyuganov said.

The 44 liberal deputies of Grigory Yavlinsky's Yabloko faction are also likely to abstain. Embarrassingly, the only Kiriyenko loyalists in the Duma are the 51 ultra-nationalists of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who on Wednesday blamed Jews for the outbreak of the second world war.

"Kiriyenko has no chance of

getting the support of the Duma. The parties are in a very militant mood," said Vladimir Ryzhkov of Our Home.

Mr Yeltsin, who reaffirmed his support for Mr Kiriyenko this week, is likely to nominate him immediately if deputies vote him down. If the Duma rejects the same candidate three times the president can dissolve parliament and call new elections.

'Giant cucumber' to slake north Cyprus thirst

John Hooper, Southern Europe Correspondent

WITHIN the next three months a vast plastic sack of water is due to be hauled from the southern shores of Turkey to the north coast of Cyprus as a first step towards solving the drought in the Turkish-held part of the island.

Afloat, says Huseyin Gokcekus, the territory's leading authority on hydrological problems, the sack will resemble "a giant cucumber" 390ft long and 84ft wide.

Northern Cyprus's water shortage has far-reaching economic and political im-

plications. Dr Gokcekus, who lectures at the Near East University near Nicosia, says it is the main reason why in recent years tens of thousands of Turkish Cypriots have given up trying to wrest a livelihood from the soil and emigrated.

It has also been cited as an argument why the north cannot survive as a separate state.

The water shortage is exacerbated by military occupation, in force since Turkey invaded the island in 1974 in response to a coup by ultra-nationalist Greek Cypriots.

In addition to a population of 180-200,000, there are around 35,000 Turkish

troops stationed in the north.

But the root cause is that Cyprus has been suffering abnormally low rainfall since 1971, Dr Gokcekus says. A study he conducted of the island's main aquifer, which lies under the town the Greeks call Morphon and the Turks Guzelyurt, showed it being tapped at almost twice the rate at which it was being recharged.

"In places the water table has fallen to 50 metres (160ft) below the surface," he said.

The "giant cucumber" is intended to solve the scarcity of drinking water, which is sometimes avail-

able for only one day a week in the Turkish half of Nicosia. It will be filled with 10,000 cubic metres (about 10,000 tons) of water from a spring near Alanya in southern Turkey.

It is intended to transport 3 million cubic metres in the first year. After that, the plan is to string together several sacks to form a "cucumber convoy" carrying about 7 million cubic metres annually.

The project is being funded by a Turkish-Norwegian joint venture. The cost, and whether it will be met by the Turkish or Turkish-Cypriot authorities, has not been revealed.

A pipeline is planned to

meet the even bigger challenge of restoring irrigation. It would carry 70-100 million cubic metres along the seabed from the Manavgat river in southern Turkey to the parched plains of northern Cyprus.

A treatment plant has already been built in Turkey but the size and route of the pipeline have yet to be decided.

Since the Mediterranean region is expected to become increasingly short of water, Turkey's abundant supplies are likely to give it a strategic role in the next century. It already has plans for exports to Israel, Libya, Jordan, Greece, Italy and Malta.

Court convicts Italian director who torched his opera house to pay off debt to gangsters

John Hooper in Rome

A TRIAL in the southern city of Bari has ended with the director of one of Italy's best-loved opera houses being found guilty of arranging for it to be burnt down.

Ferdinando Pinto, who won fame in 1987 when he staged Aida in front of the pyramids, was convicted of conspiring with local mobsters to torch the Petruzzelli theatre, which burnt to the ground in 1991.

He was given suspended sentences totalling seven years and eight months.

The prosecution alleged Pinto fell into the hands of loan sharks after running up debts, partly because of his

overambitious plans for the Petruzzelli. It said he conspired to destroy the opera house so the gangsters running the loan sharking operation could profit from its reconstruction.

The verdict brought protestations of disbelief from several colleagues. The Nobel prize-winning playwright and actor Dario Fo said: "It is a frightening sentence."

The prosecution's case rested heavily on the word of a criminal who had turned state's evidence.

There were parallels with a blaze that destroyed the Fenice opera house in Venice in 1996. Links are known to have existed between criminals in both cities.

Pinto was given six years for arson and one year and eight months for tax offences. Though he will not go to prison, he faces a bill for damages which runs to millions of pounds.

The small-time crook found guilty of starting the fire was jailed for four years and six months. The watchman on duty was given three years, while the loan shark and gang boss accused of masterminding the blaze were both jailed for seven years.

The Petruzzelli was the cultural centre of rundown, crime-infested Bari. Many residents are bitter that money has not been made available to rebuild it. The Fenice is to reopen next year.

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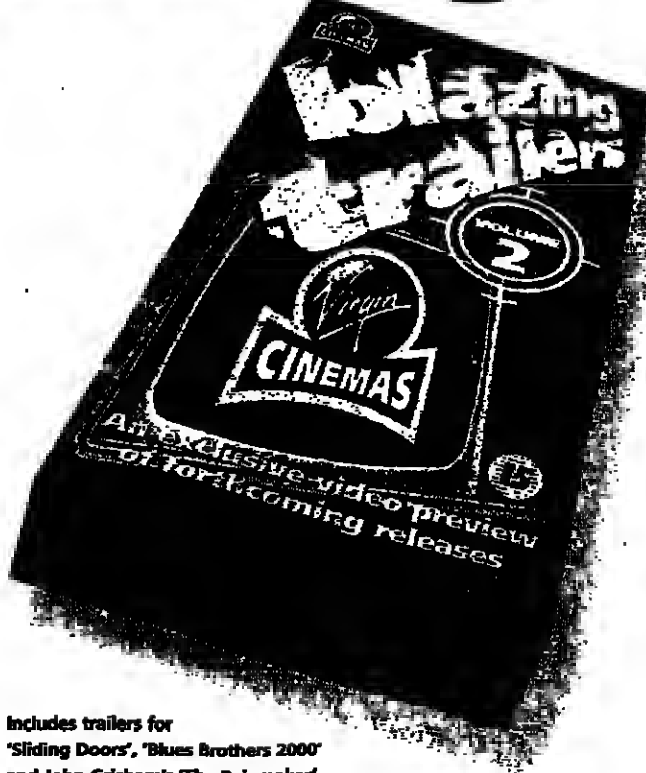
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Palestinian strife warning

David Sharrock
in Jerusalem

PALESTINIAN legislators warned of civil war yesterday as the Islamic militant group Hamas accused Yasser Arafat's chief of security of collaborating with Israel in last week's killing of its master bomb-maker Mubir al-Din Sharif.

Hatem Abdel Khader, a member of the Palestinian legislative council, said: "It is clear to me that the Palestinian Authority is not responsible for Sharif's death, but all the same I believe the authority and Hamas should together

Civil war feared as Hamas accuses Arafat's security chief of collaborating with Israel in killing of Sharif

re-examine the whole issue so as to avoid a civil war amongst us, and more bloodshed on all fronts."

A Hamas videotape given to the Press Association in Jerusalem urged attacks on Jews worldwide and accused the Palestinian Authority — and in particular Jibril Rajoub, its head of preventive security — of whitewashing Israel's role in Sharif's death.

On Monday Mr Rajoub issued a report clearing Israel of involvement. Sharif's body was found close to an exploded car-bomb in the West Bank town of Ramallah. He said Sharif had been killed in a Hamas feud over money and tactics and that his assassins — three of whom are under arrest — tried to make it look like an accidental premature explosion.

Yesterday he said that although he had asked Hamas to assist his investigation, there has been no co-operation whatsoever from them. He dismissed its claim as "not a respectable way for Hamas to deal with things".

This is the first time that Hamas has directly implicated Mr Arafat's government in the killing. Palestinian officials have directly accused Mr Awadallah, who now heads Israel's

most wanted list, of assassinating Sharif, allegedly based on information given to them by another Hamas member.

Israel's Channel 2 television has claimed that a report to be released by the Palestinian Authority will reveal that Sharif was kidnapped by Hamas rivals, who forced him to confess to giving Israel secrets about the organisation.

Channel 2 said Sharif was kidnapped on March 13, 15 days before his body was found, and interrogated at length. Mr Awadallah's

brother Imad then shot him, and put his body next to a car rigged with explosives to cover the killing, the station said.

Meanwhile an Israeli military court has extended the detention of three members of a Hamas cell accused of assisting in bombings which killed 21 Israelis and planning other attacks. One of them, Abdel Rahman el Zaban, is a Palestinian Authority policeman. He is accused of driving suicide bombers to the sites of their attacks.

In court yesterday he said he saw no connection between his work as a policeman and his membership of the Hamas cell, Israel Radio reported.

Power-line landing leaves pilot dangling

AP in Seattle

THE pilot of this Cessna 150B, (right) hung upside down in his cockpit for almost four hours awaiting rescue yesterday after the plane became entangled in power cables as he came in to land at Boeing Field in Seattle.

Mike Warren, aged 47, finally made the last 60ft back to earth in a fire authority basket.

"He was more concerned about his airplane than he was about himself," said Lieutenant Dave Ewing, one of the rescuers.

Mr Warren, apparently unhurt, was taken to hospital for a check-up.

A hospital spokeswoman said: "He's in good. He has no pain."

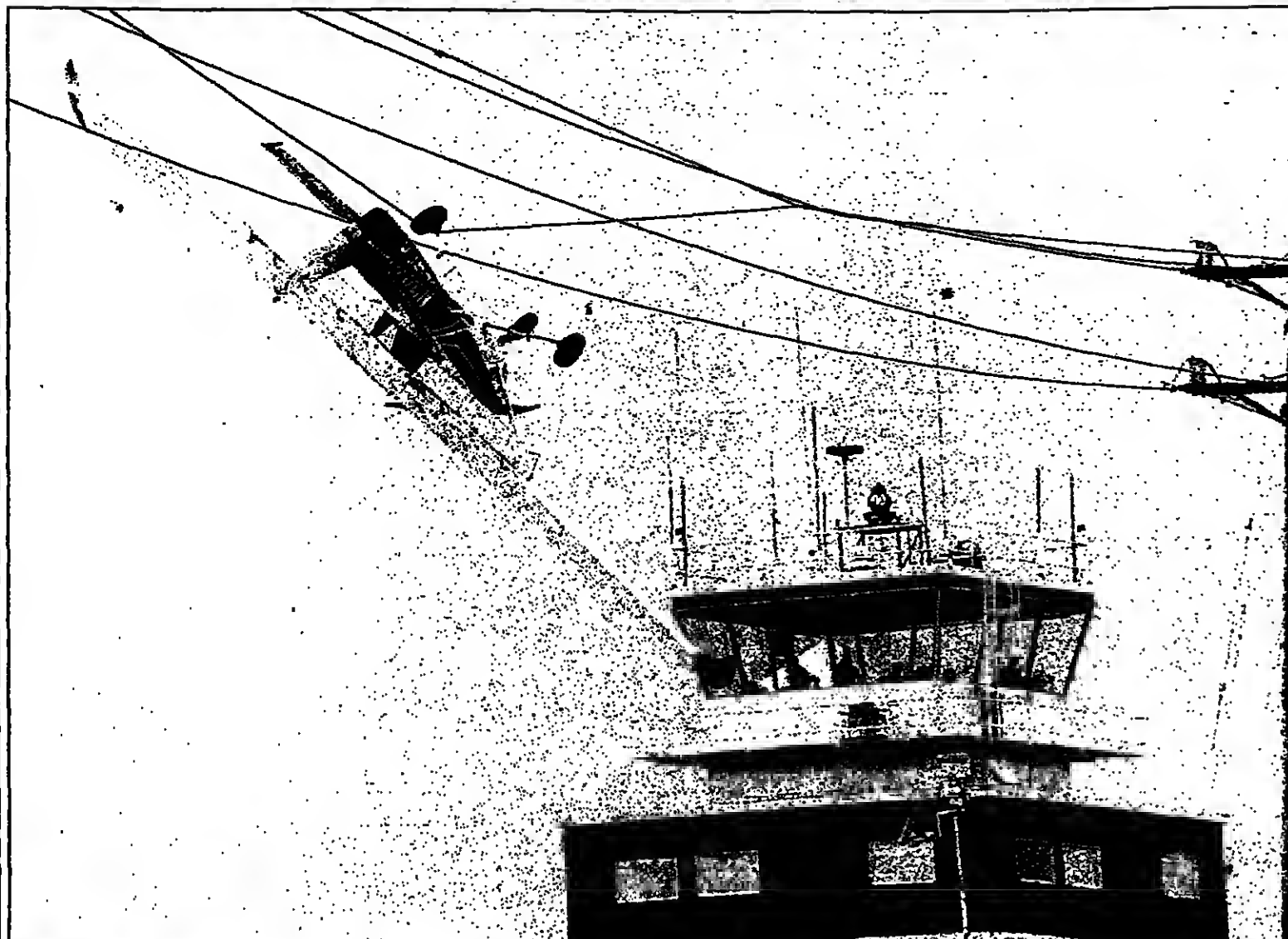
The plane hung by one wheel over an access road to the airport, which serves mainly light aircraft.

The road was closed to traffic while a crane was brought in and Seattle firefighters worked out how to get Mr Warren down — with or without his aircraft.

They finally secured the plane with straps and raised a rescue basket on a ladder.

An estimated 2,500 homes and businesses were left without power during the rescue.

PHOTOGRAPH: BARRY SWEET



Dwyll Plunking, Cromer Beach, Norfolk



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ALLIANCE LEICESTER

Tornadoes kill 33 across US

Agencies in Birmingham, Alabama

TORNADOES ripped through the south-eastern United States overnight, killing at least 33 people in Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi and striking some areas with the force of a bomb blast, officials and witnesses said yesterday.

Rescuers were frantically searching through the rubble of homes for survivors. The hardest-hit area was Alabama's Jefferson County, west of Birmingham.

"It is very similar to what an atomic bomb would do if it was dropped in a neighbourhood," said the county sheriff, Jim Woodward. "There is really no place to hide from something like this."

The Alabama governor, Fob James, said at least 24 people had died in the state and 150 homes had been destroyed, with a further 300 suffering major damage. About 20,000 homes had been left without electricity.

He declared a state of emergency and said he expected federal relief funds to be approved within hours.

The loss of life is overwhelming, he told a news conference, adding that thousands of residents had heeded tornado warnings and taken cover.

Without the warnings, he said, "the death toll could have been quadrupled".

Sheriff Woodward said that he expected the toll to climb as rescuers picked through homes ripped apart like matchwood.

Officials in Georgia said at least eight people had been killed across the state, among them a soldier at an army base.

Three people died in a fire that began after a building was struck by lightning. A teenager was killed in Mississippi when a hot water heater landed on his head.

The powerful storm system, with winds of up to 250 mph, triggered the warnings an hour before sunset. Two hours later it embarked on a twisted trail of destruction across Alabama, before crossing after midnight to Georgia and Mississippi.

Hail the size of golf balls was reported.

In Rock Creek, Alabama, homes of wood and brick were reduced to their foundations, with furniture scattered across gardens, and branches and power lines triggered the warnings an hour before sunset.

One car rested upright atop the remnants of a petrol station.

More than a dozen tornadoes were spotted in Georgia by radar or by people on the ground.

"It looks like a bomb went off around here," said a police officer, Shane Ricketts.

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News in brief

Church told to pay priest's sex victim

THE head of the Catholic Church in Belgium was yesterday ordered to pay damages to one of the victims of a priest jailed for six years for sexually assaulting young boys, after a court decided he had failed to take action against the man despite receiving warnings of his activities.

In the first such judgment in Belgium, Cardinal Godfried Danneels was told to pay 500,000 francs (£8,000) to the youth after the conviction of Abbe André Vanderyn, parish priest of an inner-city area of Brussels. The local bishop has been ordered to pay a similar amount after the court ruled that both men could be considered the equivalent of Vanderyn's employers.

The court heard that Vanderyn, aged 64, had tried to tell his superiors about offences stretching back 35 years and had sought psychiatric help. The church hierarchy told parishioners everything was under control. — *Stephen Bates, Brussels*

100 die in Algerian attacks

NEARLY 100 civilians and Muslim rebels have been slaughtered in Algeria during this week's celebrations of the Muslim Feast of Sacrifice, Algerian newspapers said yesterday.

More than half of those killed were civilians, mostly women and children, in violence which mirrored past surges of slaughter during religious holidays when Muslim rebels say are propitious for what they term their "holy struggle".

Security forces said the 100 civilians had their throats cut in attacks on villages and an outlying suburb of Arzew town, in the north-west of the country. In one raid on Tuesday night, El Wazir newspaper said, 28 people were slaughtered, including a four-month-old baby and a pregnant woman; four of the women were raped before their throats were cut.

The paper said the security forces had killed more than 40 "terrorists", including a man known as Raddi the Blond, blamed for at least 50 killings. — *Reuters, Paris*

Lebanese jail rioters shot

A CRACK police squad shot and wounded three inmates in an operation that rescued five policemen taken hostage yesterday during a revolt in Lebanon's largest prison, an official said.

The policemen had been taken hostage by inmates while they were firing doors in Roumieh jail, on the third day of Lebanon's biggest prison rebellion since before the 1975-90 civil war, the official said. Three hundred prisoners took part in the revolt to demand better living conditions and a general amnesty. Witnesses said police had fired tear-gas. — *Reuters, Roumieh*

Front officials guilty

A LOCAL official of France's far-right National Front and three members of the party's private security force were given suspended prison sentences yesterday for impersonating police officers and "arresting" political opponents.

An appeals court upheld decisions against Claude Jaffres, a regional councillor, and the Front's controversial "protection and security service", ruling that the four were guilty of illegally assuming police duties and making arbitrary arrests by detaining and searching leftwing protesters after the anti-immigrant party's annual congress in Strasbourg last year.

Mr Jaffres was given a one-year suspended sentence and banned from holding public office for two years; the security agents received suspended sentences ranging from six months to a year. — *Jon Henley, Paris*

US urged to halt execution

THE World Court said yesterday that the United States should halt the execution of a murderer due to die next Tuesday at a prison in Virginia.

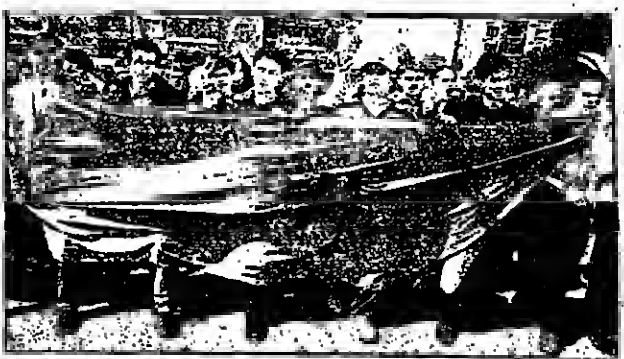
Paraguay had asked the United Nations court to stop the execution on the grounds that Angel Francisco Breard, a Paraguayan national, had not been allowed access to consular officials during his detention in the US, in breach of the 1963 Vienna Convention. — *Reuters, The Hague*

Clinton 'plan to seize Pol Pot'

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton has ordered the defence, state and justice departments to devise plans for the arrest and trial of Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge leader alleged to be responsible for the death of up to a million Cambodians in the 1970s, the New York Times reported yesterday.

Pol Pot and other Khmer Rouge leaders are said to be in hiding in the Cambodian jungle a few miles across the border with Thailand, the paper said; it said the Thai government had suggested it would take Pol Pot into custody as long as the US agreed to spirit him out of Thailand within hours. — *Reuters, New York*

Kosovans rally behind flag



Ethnic Albanians protest against their Serbian rulers in Pristina. Talks between Belgrade and Kosovo Albanians remained deadlocked yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: SRIJAN SINGH

Kurd leader urges ceasefire

THE Kurdish rebel leader, Abdullah Ocalan, has written to Turkey's prime minister and armed forces calling for a ceasefire in their 13-year conflict, the Turkish newspaper Hurriyet said yesterday. Mr Ocalan, head of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), said he had resolved no reply to his offer, made on Kurdish TV, Turkey has in the past refused to negotiate with the group, which it considers a terrorist organisation. — *Reuters, Ankara*

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Analysis Blood-donor service



Grooming the next Warhol 12

A precious resource bleeds away

The sacking of the boss of the NBA was inevitable after a series of tragic errors.
Sarah Boseley reports

BITAIN'S blood transfusion service, a vital resource for the NHS, has been hit by a scandal after the sacking of its boss, Sir Colin Walker, on Wednesday. Walker's restructuring efforts as chair of the National Blood Authority have seriously damaged the transfusion service, a devastating report commissioned by the Health Secretary said. It is a hard knock, but only one of many that have left the service in a crisis of confidence.

The blows include: 12 haemophiliacs died of hepatitis C after transfusions of contaminated blood; £42 million paid in compensation to patients who contracted AIDS or HIV from infected blood; 7,000 units of blood — nearly 10 per cent of stocks — were destroyed after a batch of cheap Australian blood bags was found to be faulty. There have been allegations of sales of British blood to Turkey and rumours that blood could be bought and sold in the UK in violation of Britain's carefully guarded policy of voluntary giving.

Donating blood is a potent form of altruism. It costs you nothing more than a needle jab and a little time, but you can save a life. Particularly through the idealistic 1950s and 1970s, the British took their transfusion service to their hearts.

The touring bloodmobiles and the makeshift clinics with wooden chairs in village halls became such an affectionately familiar part of the nation's life that it inspired one of the most famous comedy sketches of another national institution, Tony Hancock, whose nervous donor on BBC radio was appalled to learn that he was expected to give up "a whole armful" of blood.

Richard Timmins examined the willingness of the British to donate their blood in a famous book, *The Gift Relationship*, published in 1970, using the subject to explore the fundamental relationships between individuals and society. "Why give to strangers?" he asked, "a question provoking an even more fundamental moral issue: who is my stranger in the relatively

affluent, acquisitive and divisive societies of the twentieth century?"

But the warmth has cooled. While the number of donors continues to rise each year there is no longer acceptance by the general public that the blood transfusion service is unquestionably decent and well-run.

The Cash report, published on Wednesday, has confirmed in the most black and white damning detail what had been bruited abroad by transfusion staff for years — that the attempt, begun in 1984, to pull together the 15 regional centres, which collected, tested and processed blood from their areas and then distributed it to local hospitals, has been badly botched.

Professor Cash recognised what the NBA, created to turn this regional diversity into something centrally controlled and more efficient and economic, did not. "While rationalisation should be promoted, it needs to be recognised that much of the critical business of a blood transfusion service is transacted in village halls, factory canteens and at the hospital bedside or clinic. These environs are inextricably linked, are not readily accessible to the authority of a blood transfusion service's management, and therefore require great sensitivity in managing change," he wrote.

Few dispute that it was sensible to centralise aspects of the service. The regional centres did not even operate on the same computer system, and clearly bulk purchasing could provide economies. In these cash-strapped, leaner management days, something had to be done. In 1993, the Conservatives invented the NBA.

The authority called in management consultants. "They produced four options for possible change," says Derek Machin, chairman of the Merseyside Consultants and Specialists Committee, who has been in the thick of the fray. "Three were evolutionary and the fourth was revolutionary. The NBA opted for the most aggressive. In the view of most of us, they wanted to be seen to be doing something — the bigger the bang the more people think you are doing."

He adds: "It was the most

disgraceful consultation document I have ever seen. It was not only useless but actually misleading."

The Cash report says that the whole exercise was very badly handled, that the doubts and reservations of staff were not listened to, and that managers were left under stress and with low morale trying to cope with the fall-out as people quit their jobs.

Five centres where blood was tested and processed were designated for the site: Brentwood, Lancaster, Liverpool, Oxford and Plymouth. Plymouth, whose functions were to have been passed to Bristol, has been relieved. The NBA now acknowledges that there could have been problems getting blood from Bristol to the toe of Cornwall within the two hours it guarantees.

OXFORD, says Kevin Greene, Unison's chief negotiator for the staff side within the blood service, was a particularly successful centre. Liverpool was also good, and yet it was to close. What was the logic to it? "Somebody within the NBA showed me a handwritten sketch map with the centres marked on it and said, 'These two are too close together — look, we can spread them out and get a more evenly balanced spread of dots around the country'. I thought, 'My God — what a back-of-a-fag-pack approach'."

It was in Liverpool that the whole thing came unstuck. Hospital consultants like Mr Machin joined with transfusion staff in horrified protest. While Liverpool was expected to continue to collect blood from local donors, it would then be taken to Manchester for testing and processing before being returned for use in Merseyside and North Wales. One of the objections was logistical — the difficulty of getting blood quickly from Manchester to, say, Bangor — which was supposed to be overcome by enlarging the blood bank at Liverpool.

Nothing about the plan appealed to Liverpool, which was enormously proud of its high quality blood service, says Mr Machin.

The lobbying of local doc-

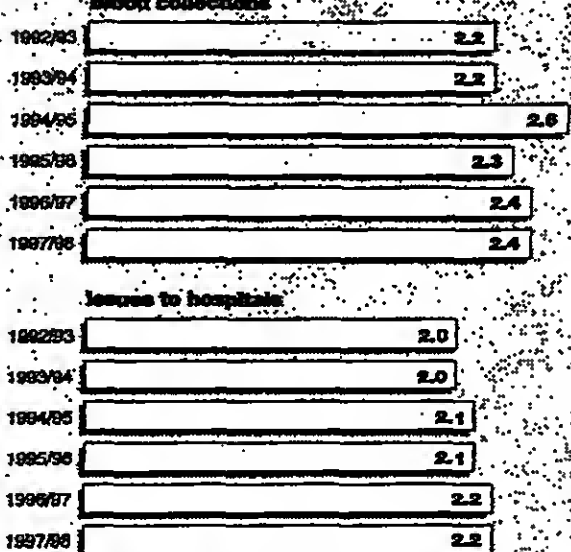
NBA: the haemorrhage at the heart of the NHS

The National Blood Authority (NBA) was established in April 1993, and since then has been struggling to manage the National Blood Transfusion Service. The service, which provides blood for transfusion to hospitals, is the largest of its kind in the world.



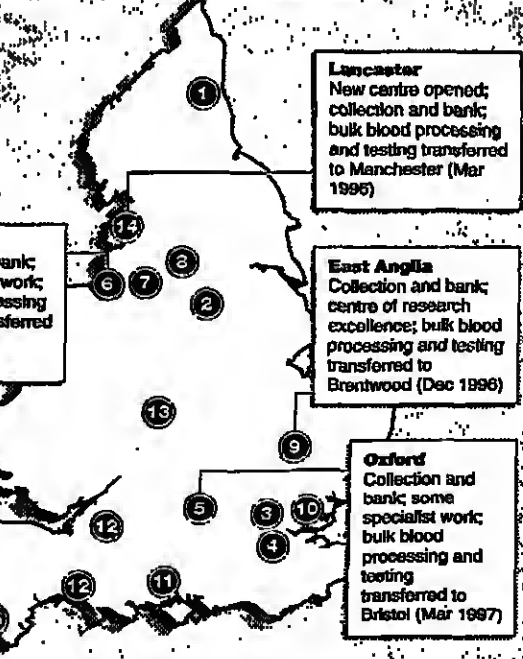
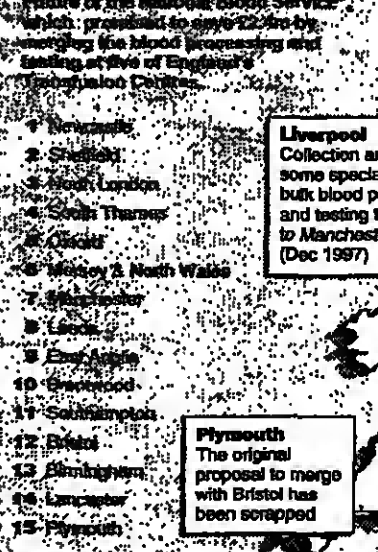
Supply and demand

Number of blood collections and issues to hospitals, millions of units



Making a deposit

Number of blood collections and issues to hospitals, millions of units



tors made no impact on Sir Colin Walker, the head of the NBA who has just been sacked by the Health Secretary, Frank Dobson.

It was Mr Dobson who appointed Professor Cash, President of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, to investigate the "serious run-down of experienced and skilled technical and support staff in the Liverpool Centre which had been going on for over two years."

The Cash report pulls no punches. "Change seems to have been imposed in a manner that denotes an obsession with structure, a disinterest

in process and at times a disdain for those who have questioned the need for some of the changes and/or pleaded for prioritisation and phasing." The NBA's reorganisation had "resulted in considerable damage to this much loved and respected people's service."

Other havoc has been caused, some of it unfortunate and some perhaps careless. Mr Machin believes it was a foolish decision to destroy all 7,000 units of blood stored in 5,000 faulty Australian-made Tuta bags. Donors were shocked and supplies went dangerously low. In

Scotland, the instruction went out to examine each bag and destroy only those that were leaking. No ill-effects were felt.

Contamination of blood with the HIV virus and also the hepatitis C virus given to haemophiliacs has been most unfortunate, and costly in terms of lives and compensation payments. By the time screening of blood products was introduced in 1985, 1,500 haemophiliacs had been infected with HIV. The transfusion service was not helped by the desperate spectacle of victims dying at the rate of one a week before the govern-

ment settled £42 million compensation in 1990.

Shortages have also plagued the service. Every winter, there are panics over low blood stocks and the possibility of wholesale cancellation of operations, which is often blamed on reorganisation but which the NBA argue is simply due to colds and flu among donors. Most recently, there has been talk of buying blood products from the US, where, notoriously, blood is sold, sometimes allegedly by drug addicts, because of the fear of nvCJD in British blood.

The much-loved transfusion service must surely be at

a record low. Is there now enough goodwill lingering in Britain to revive its fortunes?

Sources: (1) *The Gift Relationship*, by Richard M. Titmuss, Pelican, 1970; (2) Independent Review of Proposals for the Transfer of Bulk Blood Processing and Testing from Liverpool to Manchester, by John Cash, March 1998, published by the Department of Health. Graphic sources: National Blood Service, report by Professor John Cash. Graphics: Finbar Sheehy. Research: Matt Keating. Sarah Boseley is the Guardian's health correspondent.

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Diary

Matthew Norman

TODAY'S Good Friday Special begins with a tale of spiritual resurrection. My eye is caught by the following headline on the front page of this week's *Psychic News*: "Haunted Theatre Royal in Margate hosts first night of play co-written by 'dead' actor Frankie Howard." Nay, nay, missus, and thrice nay. Surely not? But yes (or even yes). Writer Paul Harris first heard Mr Howard's voice last year, he explains while composing a mini-biography of him, and agreed to allow the "late" comedian to cooperate with him in the interests of truth. From this amiable working relationship to joint authorship of a play was an inevitable progression. The first night of *Titter Not: The Bare Facts About Frankie Howard* is next Thursday. The "dead" comedian's fans will be pleased to learn that Francis himself has promised to attend.

MEANWHILE, in more dead comic news, a club in London's West End has been threatened with closure a fortnight after opening. The trouble began last Friday, according to the *Stage* newspaper, when officials from Westminster council warned the Ministry of Comedy that its licence would be revoked if a certain act — *Bastard Son of Tommy Cooper* — was allowed to perform a certain trick... one in which he appears to explode a live rabbit. The club backed down, and this is a real shame. At this time of year, there's nothing quite like a Hot Cross Bunny.

PRAISE be! Diary vicar the Rev Steve Chalke has supplied his Easter message. Rev Steve, who has just written, is an exceedingly busy TV performer (he moonlights as a Baptist minister in Purley, south London), and we appreciate his time more than words can say. What follows is an abridged version of his full text. "I did a TV programme on Easter Sunday once, and it all went really well, and then at the end I looked at the camera and said, 'All of you at home, have a happy Christmas.' How embarrassing! So that's the story of Easter. It's Friday but Sunday's coming. The tears of pain will turn to tears of joy. You can't keep God down." Beautifully put. Thanks, Rev Steve. And God bless.

FROM one key religious figure to another... and news of an exciting literary project concerning one of Britain's most volatile Roman Catholics. I am close to signing a contract to co-write (with a colleague) the biography of Paul Johnson. It is too soon to be certain, but the book may be unauthorised, while the title has yet to be decided. Paul Johnson: A Sane and Rational Friend is one possibility, as is *The Honorable Bede (Bede is the dear old chap's middle name)*. The book, an affectionate canter through Paul's life and career, will be precisely 150 pages long, and will be published in the autumn. Details of how those with information to offer can contact us (by phone, fax or personal visit) will appear here shortly.

IN Mexico, the image of the Virgin Mary has turned up in a cake. Reporters have journeyed to Bacalar, a village 650 miles east of Mexico City, to see the cake, which sits in a makeshift altar in the home of Farnanda Rivas. This is not the first such miracle this year. Far from it: Our Lady appeared recently on the faded fender of an old Chevrolet in northern Mexico. Before this, her last manifestation was in a sewage stain found in a Mexico City subway.



IT'S NOT WHAT IT SEEMS, ONE OF THE MIRACLES OF THE VIRGIN MARY



Even on Good Friday, our weapons of mass destruction do not sleep

Decca Aitkenhead



IT'S sometimes said that today's young people are nostalgic before their time. We call our dance hits "classics" before they're out of the charts; Oasis sell millions because they sound like our parents' favourite pop group. If there's some truth in this, and there probably is, it's also worth noting that older people aren't as good at nostalgia as they used to be. Instead of the real thing, the oh-for-the-days-of-free-university-places etc, we see a kind of pseudo-nostalgia creeping in. Fifty-somethings' giggles which were once reserved for old flares — now reserved for old flares — are now being directed at all their pre-war Labour tastes.

It's been a lovely week for nostalgia. The 40th anniversary of CND's first march to Aldermaston is the very thing to get it going, combining as it does the opportunity to demonstrate both that one was once exciting and radical, and also that one is altogether more sensible now. CND's membership has withered from 100,000 to about a third, and many who left their subscription lapse say they did so because it turned out they were wrong. Just as denim flares did in fact look stupid, so the anti-nuclear argument was flawed. In the end our atomic weapons won the cold war. The subject is closed.

One of Britain's last peace camps also looked like it could close this week. The Faslane camp, tucked at the gates of the Trident nuclear base in Scotland, was facing eviction. It's been there with the council's blessing since the Falklands war, but the new council has had enough of the "eyesore" and on Monday it took the protesters to court. They were saved on a technicality, and are staying

put, though the council may yet appeal. The peace camp sits on the banks of Gare Loch, a hauntingly beautiful stretch of water not far from Loch Lomond. It looks just as you'd expect — dodgy caravans painted in primary colours, banners strung along the fence, CND signs everywhere. Some dozen or so protesters live here. They produce newsletters, get in the way of convoys, get arrested from time to time, and give the MOD police and Rovers something to drive past and peer at. They dig tunnels, bitch about CND's tactics ("it should funk itself up"), and quote facts and figures with varying degrees of accuracy to journalists who show up to present the Aldermaston nuclear submarines sink out of the vast naval base, they monitor them.

What's the point? There are more exciting protests to be on. If young people (and most protesters at Faslane were born well after the Aldermaston march) are nostalgic for the demos their parents can actually remember, perhaps they should try Home Counties' tree houses and tunnels instead. As they sit there in leaky caravans, what exactly do they think they're achieving?

IT'S an easy enough question to ask, but it's also a lazy and trite. A more interesting question would ask what is going on in everyone else's heads. Ex-CND members who now say we "won" the cold war surely cannot believe Gorbachev dismantled the Soviet Union because he thought the west was about to launch a nuclear war unless they stopped being communists. And they certainly can't imagine it was

Britain's warheads which made the difference.

You also have to wonder what the crews of the Trident submarines think they're doing, as they navigate their perilous cargo through shallow lochs and out to sea. The MOD won't tell us anything about their movements, but it's believed that a Trident is out on patrol, on high alert, 365 days of the year. Unsurprisingly, the MOD is also unable to say which these crews are preparing themselves for. Locals around Fas-

It's been a lovely week for cod nostalgia for CND's first march

lane tell you Trident is a good thing because it keeps their dad/husband in work — but this argument did little good for ship builders and miners, and it is not clear why it should matter more here. But the Government says it does have a reason for sticking to the Tories' Trident policy, and here it is. "The nuclear deterrent has prevented major conflict in Europe for over 50 years. Trident enables the UK to maintain a credible and effective deterrent into the next century." This is a characteristic argument, given Tony Blair's tendency to present history as a series of immutable facts. Just as Labour's 18 years out of office "proves" his policies are as radical as Britain will ever allow, and globalisation "proves" the free market must prevail, so the Soviet collapse "proves" Trident works.

You might argue that as

this is the Government's fixed opinion, those camped out in the rain at Faslane are wasting their time. Even if you think it's a moronic opinion, you might say they're still wasting their time. Labour has confirmed the procurement of a fourth Trident submarine, and it will arrive in Faslane by the millennium. Over 90 per cent of the total procurement cost of Trident (£12.6 billion) has already been spent anyway. Labour were unlikely to renege so soon on a manifesto commitment as Sun-sensitive as this.

But the subject is not closed. Of course there are a few wildcat campaigners at Faslane who don't care if they're wasting their time or not. But we should still be glad they're hoarding to remind us that nuclear weapons are cruising around our waters, at vast expense and risk, and that we can still do something about them. Under the ongoing strategic defence review, our "posture" on Trident is still being considered. Official annual running costs are put at £200 million, though CND places the figure far higher; this could be cut drastically if the weapons were taken off 24-hour alert, and even more so were they put into storage. Instead of talking up the dangers of proliferation, the nuclear states could actually do something to dissuade other countries from developing their own capacity, by announcing an unequivocal first use policy.

To regard the anti-nuclear campaign like some amusing if slightly embarrassing thing in your old record collection is a little premature. If these modest measures can be taken, steps towards disarmament may yet become a realistic Labour goal.

That Nat Tate hoax

Bill Buford



IS David Bowie going to be New York's next Andy Warhol? That was the view expressed to me by Jeffrey Deitch, a leading Manhattan art dealer. "The art world needs a figure," Deitch said. "Since Warhol died, there has been no glamour, no leadership." "Does David Bowie know this?" I asked, feeling a little alarmed on his behalf.

The art dealer and I were standing near an open window in a large SoHo studio packed with people. I don't know how many. Five hundred? It was an unexpectedly warm evening, and guests had come dressed expecting a cool one — lots of black and leather trousers — with the unhappy result that everyone was sweating profusely. The smell hit you the moment you entered — there's no other way to describe it: it was a room full of BO. When was the last time any of these people bathed?

This was the party that the British magazine *Modern Painters* was hosting to celebrate — well, to celebrate what exactly? The magazine? Possibly, except that it's not really available here. There is also its publishing venture, which is not called, say, *Modern Painters Books*, (too obvious, obviously) but *21*; and which has just published William Boyd's mock biography "Nat Tate". But the book doesn't seem to be available here either.

Maybe it was just a coming-out party for David Bowie, the new Andy Warhol. Of course, he looks like Andy Warhol, and he did play him in Basquiat, the film by Julian Schnabel (and was here too, talking to the dealer, Larry Gagosian — Schnabel's big white shirt hanging out of his trousers like a bed sheet, wet with sweat and sticking to his chest).

SCHNABEL'S film was about a young artist who dies in his early 30s. Nat Tate is also a young artist who dies in his early 30s, and David Bowie (who, despite his nifty, snug-fitting three-piece tweed suit, was not sweating and appeared to be the only person here to have worn any deodorant) had just read aloud the final pages of William Boyd's account, the suicide, in which Nat Tate slips off the back of the Staten Island ferry and disappears forever. Art imitating art imitating an artist imitating an artist. And of course this powerful smell everywhere. "It was very moving," according to the art dealer.

I had already met David Bowie. He'd come to a party

for Ian McEwan and Martin Amis. Both authors had recorded stories for a venture called *The New Yorker Out-loud*. As the magazine's literary editor, I was host. I was surprised to see David Bowie, but pleased. He was apologetic. "I don't normally come to this kind of thing," he explained, "but we're giving a party in a few weeks' time, and I came along to see how it is done. I wouldn't have come otherwise."

What was I meant to do with this information? I accepted his apology — you're forgiven, Mr Bowie, for coming to the party that I invited you to — introduced him to Ian McEwan, and moved on, puzzled further by the notion that David Bowie needs lessons in how to throw a party. Two weeks later, a publicist phoned me. She was offering the New Yorker an exclusive chance to watch David Bowie rehearsing his reading of William Boyd's biography — that was how she described it. Bowie would give a reading at the party.

A journalist was duly dispatched. My interest wasn't in David Bowie's rehearsal (do people normally rehearse this sort of thing?), but in the magazine behind it. *Modern Painters* has developed into a clever, entertaining, and original publication edited by Kathryn Wright. The genius of her approach is to get writers, often very literary writers, to take on visual subjects. William Boyd is one of her contributors, but so are Craig Raine, Nick Hornby, Julian Barnes, Germaine Greer, Gordon Burn, Howard Jacobson, and, of course, David Bowie, who has also got involved in the business and invested some money.

And out of this came William Boyd's story about Nat Tate. Of course there is no Nat Tate, and people have said this week that the good people of

Maybe Bowie is the next Warhol. He certainly throws a good party

Modern Painters have caught out the New York art world. Maybe yes, maybe no. But had anyone had a copy of the book (no one could) it would be difficult to miss its drool riles. And the hoax is not the point. The point may simply have been Bowie. Everywhere he went, he was followed by a crowd of 40, 50 people. Some were friends, eager to have a word; some were fans. But many — in this self-consciously hip and groovy crowd — just wanted to be near him. They followed him, mouths open, shuffling behind, going wherever he went. "It's a happening," my art dealer friend was saying. "You won't get this crowd anywhere else in New York. Art Forum could never get this crowd. They're here because of Bowie."

Maybe Bowie is the next Warhol. He certainly knows how to throw a good party.

'My place at Easter was not only at the altar, but on the Aldermaston road'

40-year march

Paul Oestreicher

ON AUGUST 7, 1945 I was a 13-year-old schoolboy in New Zealand. That winter morning, incredulous, we asked our physics master how it was possible for one bomb, the day before, to turn the whole city of Hiroshima to ashes. He was one of our best and most respected teachers. He told us of Lord Rutherford, the great New Zealand physicist, and his atomic experiments in Cambridge that had now evidently led to the harnessing of such unimaginable destructive power. Of course I will never forget his words as the lesson ended: "Boys, either we now learn to abolish war or war will abolish us."

By the late 50s I was a young curate in the East End of London. What could I do to avert the threat of

the cold war, now at its height, turning into a nuclear holocaust? I did not need my vicar, Stanley Evans, a pioneer of the Christian Socialist Movement, to convince me that my place at Easter was not only at the altar praying for peace, but on the Aldermaston road. Aldermaston, because to this day it is the cradle of Britain's potential to contribute to the end of life on this planet.

So with my wife, our daughter in a pushchair, we marched with thousands of others whose hearts beat for the survival of the world's children. Pipe-in-mouth John Collins strode out at the head in his black cassock, wartime RAF Chaplain. Canon of St Paul's, his children at Eton, proud possessor of a vintage Rolls Royce. This turbulent priest was no wild radical; with him walked Michael Foot and Labour stalwarts Fenner Brock-

way, Tony Greenwald, Frank Allam, Frank Cousins and the skilled, tough organiser Peggy Duff. The Rev Donald Soper was at the head of the march and other notable figures included Arnold Wesker, Doris Lessing, George Melly, James Cameron and Vicky. But the thousands, old and young, who year by year converged

We were with thousands whose hearts beat for the world's children

on Trafalgar Square were not an intellectual elite but simply ordinary, caring people. Yes, the Quakers and the principled pacifists were there. So were a handful of Communists and their fellow travellers, enough for the hostile

media to smear the thousands who would gladly, had it been possible, have carried the same banners in Moscow.

For the party establishment, all three, the doctrine of deterrence became a fixed dogma. When even Nye Bevan declared: "We will not go into the conference chambers of the world naked," many were bitterly disillusioned. My short-lived membership of the Labour party was over. Vicky's cartoon, after that speech, showed Gandhi, in his loin-cloth standing behind Nye: "I went into the conference chamber naked and won." But not against Stalin, the Nato establishment ruled, with no lack of conviction.

Deterrence seemed to be working, the threat less acute: the numbers of the frightened receded. But the danger had not gone. Survival depended on the sanity of a few politicians. Ken-

nedy and Khrushchev were sane and, over Cuba, withdrew from the brink. By a hair's breadth we survived.

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament declined but survived too, to revive, with even greater numbers in the early 80s. The fear of intermediate-

range nuclear missiles, targeted on each other, and threatening to leave a European wasteland brought the people back on to the streets, a new generation of the young, but veterans too. Michael Foot was still there and the few conviction politicians to whom winning

power was not the first priority. Now at the head was Catholic priest and one-time tank officer, Bruce Kent.

The politicians were beginning to listen to a frightened world. Reagan, animated by a patently sincere Gorbachev, said yes to the first stage of nuclear disarmament. The masses could once again fold up their banners. The crisis had passed. The journey on the long road from what Aldermaston still symbolises, to what the nuclear non-proliferation treaty commits Britain and all its signatories had begun: the abolition of all nuclear weapons. We did not march, 40 years ago, in vain. The road may still need our hearts and minds and feet.

Paul Oestreicher, Canon Emeritus of Coventry Cathedral, is vice-president of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament



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Crime and punishment Prison isn't working

WHO SAID the Home Office was a graveyard for ambitious politicians? This week's report from the department is full of good news: a 9 per cent fall last year in recorded crime, the largest drop in post second world war history. There have now been five consecutive years in which recorded crime has fallen, the first time this has happened since records began over 100 years ago. Compared with the 5.5 million recorded crimes in 1993, there were only 4.6 million in 1997. The crimes which most concern the public — robbery, burglary, taking away or breaking into vehicles — were all down by a thumping 14 per cent each. Of course it was not all good news. Violent crime edged up a further 1.7 per cent, but this was far smaller than the 10.9 per cent increase of the previous year and was pushed up predominantly through sex offences, where there is a far greater readiness to report because of more sympathetic policing. Of course all the statistics come with the standard warnings: these are only reported crimes. Unreported crimes are four times as high. This week's figures need to be handled with care but they are not meaningless.

To their credit, there was no crowing from ministers and even more important, they once again left it to their officials to brief the media in contrast to Michael Howard's nauseating triumphalist presentations. There are some obvious reasons why crime has fallen: the big drop in unemployment, a critical cause which most

Conservative ministers continued to deny, though not Kenneth Clarke, an 11 per cent demographic fall in the most criminal age group (young people aged 15 to 24); better car security; and changes in policing policy, including targeting urban "hot spots" and more effective crime prevention programmes.

So is Jack Straw facing an untroubled future? Far from it. Even with this fall in crime, the courts continued to cram even more people inside. The prison population now stands at 66,800, a rise of 11,000 since Labour was elected. It is continuing to rise by over 1,000 a month (the equivalent of almost three prison ships). A government which has been squeezing health, education and social security to keep to Conservative spending limits, has already been forced to inject an extra £110 million — in two separate emergency packages — just to accommodate the prison influx. February's £70 million deal was three times the amount set aside to cut the size of primary school classes. Worse still, recorded crime is likely to start climbing again. This year's 4.6 million is likely to be as good as it gets. The number of young people will begin to increase again and so will temptations from the build up of goods which consumers have bought during the current boom.

The director general of the prison service has talked of needing 20 more prisons at a cost of £2 billion. This is Daily Mail madness. The latest official projections forecast a prison population of 92,000 by 2005. But this does not need to happen. Mr Straw is not helpless. Judges and police officers listen and are steered by a Home Secretary's rhetoric. Of course serious offenders should be sent to prison, but the courts are sending far too many other people who would be better off repaying their debts in the community. It is time the Lord Chief

Justice gave a lead with some new judicial guidance.

Meanwhile the Government opens the first of five children's prisons next week, a move which Labour condemned in opposition. Howard's disingenuous mantra, "prison works", needs to be exploded. The department's own research shows we would need to increase the prison population by 25 per cent to achieve a 1 per cent reduction in crime. The reason is simple enough: the system only deals with one out of every 50 recorded crimes. The new Crime and Disorder Bill will help with its emphasis on prevention. What is missing is a readiness at the top to educate the public. People are not as punitive as tabloid editors believe. Jack Straw should learn from Michael Howard's mistakes. For all Howard's headline rhetoric, he was deeply unpopular — so unpopular, indeed, Conservative central office shut him away during the election.

Bosnian grab Extending the mandate

THE ARREST of two Bosnian Serbs suspected of war crimes sends an immediate signal to the others, up to and including the biggest criminals of all. Every time that the Nato-led Stabilisation Force (S-For) launches this kind of operation, it shows that the efforts of the international tribunal in The Hague are not so quixotic as first appeared. It also helps entrench the concept of a permanent effort to tackle such crimes wherever they occur.

The announcement yesterday by the Nato Secretary-General that S-For had detained Miroslav Kovacka and Mladen Radic "for transfer to the Hague" presented the

operation — as has been the case with other such efforts over the past year — as essentially routine. It had been undertaken, the statement explained, in accordance with S-For's mandate "which authorises it to detain such persons when encountered in the course of its duties." The impression which this gives of S-For troops happening by chance upon wanted suspects, as they wander down the main street in Prijedor, and deciding there and then to pull them in, is hardly an accurate one. That was indeed the original interpretation placed upon the Dayton Agreement mandate by which S-For's predecessor was bound. It inhibited effective action and risked bringing the whole exercise into disrepute. If restraint was justified at first while other aspects of the agreement were put in place, this inhibition is quite rightly now being discarded.

An operation privately acknowledged to have been carried out by the SAS against suspects who have been located at their homes does not happen by chance. It is a premeditated action and the more that are planned in advance the better. These two suspects stand accused of appalling crimes at the Omarska camp — along with another 17 who have not yet been arrested. Both men are said to have surrendered when it became clear they could not escape — avoiding the bloodshed of a previous episode. That is an encouraging signal which should encourage more operations against the other thugs who remain at large.

The action also reinforces the argument for the creation of a permanent international criminal court to deal with genocide and other crimes against humanity. Britain has so far given a lead — in arguing that the court should have strong powers — against US pressure to water down its scope. The issue will be decided by a UN

conference at Rome in June. The result will affect not just Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic but the perpetrators and victims of many other crimes, both of the past and (hopefully less) in the future.

Private lives

Apparently not for the famous

GEORGE MICHAEL and Robin Cook don't have an awful lot in common — save a fondness for facial hair. One is a charismatic world-renowned performer; able to make women swoon; the other is George Michael. And yet yesterday they seemed oddly united. Both were in the news not for the work they do, but because of the state of their private lives. Mr Cook stirred media interest by trying to dodge media interest — marrying Gaynor Regan 10 days ahead of the appointed date, in a rushed and furtive ceremony in Tunbridge Wells. The couple were joined in matrimony at 8.30 am, with just three others present — one of them, ironically enough, being Mr Cook's press aide. It doesn't sound very romantic — an appointment at 8.30 am usually means a trip to the dentist rather than a celebration of love.

Likewise, Mr Michael stands accused of acting out one of his most recent lyrics — looking for fast love — by snatching a moment of rushed and furtive intimacy, perhaps because he feared the adverse publicity of an openly gay relationship. Whatever the reason, Mr Cook and Mr Michael should not have been forced to such extremes in pursuit of their desires. Both men were seeking to escape public interest in their private lives. Both failed. It seems our curiosity is just too great: if you're famous, your life is never your own.

Letters to the Editor

New deal for sixties skit

KENNETH Winger's letter about the New Deal (April 9) deserves a good old-fashioned apology. We have in fact gone to great lengths to ensure that people inquiring about the New Deal can get information quickly and easily. Clearly, though, on this occasion we got it wrong. I have taken urgent steps to prevent a repetition. But in addition to calling their local Job Centre, readers can call our national helpline on 0945 606 2626, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Maybe I should have said the next time. He certainly has a good idea. NEVER mind the Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band (When's World, G2, April 8). I have an LP called Food Britannia from the early 1960s. Humorous in a skit way, it is a skit about the Profumo scandal that rocked the Super-mac government. Scripted by Leslie Brice and Anthony Newley, the cast includes Peter Sellers and Joan Collins. It may be a little early to predict a revival of Food Britannia from the mass to become an iceberg floating towards "unsinkable" New Labour? Chris Kennedy, Macclesfield, Cheshire.

I WAS struck by your clarity in printing a correction to an article on the day it actually occurred (See Soundings, April 8). I guess it is only a matter of time before you print a correction before the mistake.

Peter Mapleton, Colazza, Italy.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. The Country Diary is on Page 20.

Drivers behaving badly

THE trouble with the Great Road Rage Debate is that most drivers, including many of your correspondents, misrepresent what happens on British roads. Even the otherwise sensible G.H. Vowles (Letters, April 7), writing of better driving discipline in the US, maintains the old canard that motorways are full of slower drivers dominating the middle lane.

My experience is the following: slow lanes dominated by heavy lorries with a smattering of caravans, vans and a few cautious cars, all travelling at slightly below the legal limit; middle lane dominated by cars, avoiding the lorries by travelling at or somewhat above the legal limit; fast lane dominated by cars travelling well above the legal limit, (60mph seems about average) being harassed by aggressive drivers trying to drive even faster. I have never seen a car moving at exactly 70mph in the outside lane. If it did, there would be a queue of psychopaths behind it, trying to shunt it off the road.

Jeff Wells, London.

AS SOMEONE who has much experience of driving in the US, I do not quite recognise G.H. Vowles's description of saintly drivers

carefully and courteously proceeding along the freeways of America. Nevertheless, it is true that, in a country renowned for its violence, driving on US roads is generally a surprise to us Europeans more used to speed and aggression.

The most significant factor is the policing from the control of on-street parking to speed limit enforcement. Policing is intensive and those who transgress are much more likely to be caught than they are here. And the penalty is usually instant and punitive. Michael Crosby, Staines, Middx.

HAVING spent five years in Melbourne, I am struck by the differences in driving habits between Brits and Australians. Melbourne drivers are sticklers for the rules and regulations of road use.

Perhaps the "British way" is a reflection of the class system. The inside lane is for trucks, vans and old cars that can't keep up, the middle lane is for the family saloon, leaving the outside lane for BMW or Lexus drivers who think they have a God-given right to drive at 80mph over the speed limit and not have the slower classes getting in their way. Paul Lewis, Oxford.

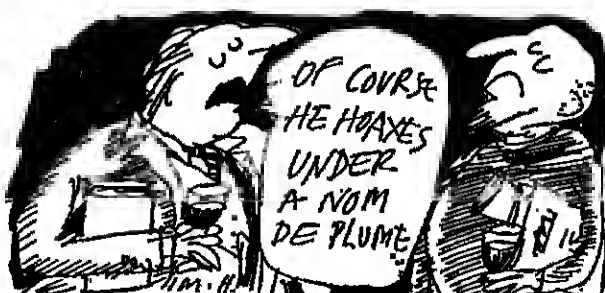
PAUL Renouf (Letters, April 6) speaks for all those meo who steam up behind me in the dreary queues on the A49, their shirt-sleeves bristling with impatience, their minds full of the importance of their business and the inferiority of the vehicles and driving skills of those in front. They are not egregious monsters like Jasoo Humble; they are more dangerous, because they are supported by families and respectable businesses — and they are legion.

Andrew Bannerman, Shrewsbury.

WHILE dawdling along the road yesterday behind a lorry doing 50mph rather than the 60mph I was permitted to travel at, I did a bit of mental arithmetic. Every mile I followed the lorry "cost" me 12 seconds. I weighed this against the many hours it would cost me to be prosecuted for dangerous driving and decided to be patient. To lose as much as five minutes would have meant a journey behind the lorry of 25 miles. The difference between 60 and 70 mph is about eight and a half seconds per mile covered. Perhaps Mr Renouf could try mental arithmetic as a cure for his impatience. Richard Lawrence, Oxford.

considerable physical and emotional pain. Both women were punished, which is wholly wrong. The sex offender is not receiving therapy, while the abused woman is.

Unless something is done to monitor these behavioural problems, it is likely that the cycle of abuse will continue and children and adults will be in danger of being abused by both men and female sex offenders. Clare Barstow, HMP Cookham Wood, Rochester.



Mock writing by fictitious authors

ODD THAT John Mullan in his review of William Boyd's *Net Tate* (Sting in Manhattan, G2, April 9) should find it ridiculous that there are authors who pretend to be people they are not without any conscious desire to mock. I was under the impression that this was partly the point of fictional writing. That said,

if he doubts the ability of the Rev Father Forward to be less than reverend, he might want to give *The Spiritual Quest of Francis Wagnall* a try, a book as merciless as it is funny. Maybe this serves to indicate there might be room for both sorts of writing? Karen Gresham, University of Hull.

Sky rocket

IN 1989 Rupert Murdoch gave the keynote speech to the Edinburgh Television Festival. In its gratuitous insulting of the BBC, its simplistic free market dogma and its lack of any understanding of the contribution of public service to British (and European) broadcasting, it was almost identical to his much-publicised conference harangue on Monday (Murdoch states "cosy" BBC, April 7). It was self-serving hypocrisy then and nothing has changed in nine years.

Murdoch does not like the BBC because it interferes with his profits from television. To call the BBC "the biggest media owner in the UK" is fundamentally to misunderstand an organisation which is not driven by the need to maximise profits, but by its constitutional duty to serve the licence payers. A source who has made programmes there will tell you that — even after the draconian reforms of the last five years — the BBC offers a space to make news,

comedy, drama, sport, current affairs programmes, even soap operas which are simply not possible in the private sector. Its funding and status offer programme-makers a creative haven which will be even more vital to Britain's cultural integrity as more channels come on stream.

Despite being envied and emulated around the world, the BBC is an easy target and Murdoch loves easy targets. But please let's not mistake his self-interest for a principled defence of any kind of coherent vision of communications policy. If the chairman of Bupa condemned the NHS as elitist and whingeing, his comments would be ignored rather than headlined. While I can understand that ministers will want to give the impression of listening intently to this nonsense, I trust that behind the door of Number 10 another arrogant lecture on British culture from an Americanised Australian will be similarly dismissed. Steven Barnett, School of Communication, Design and Media, University of Westminster.

Kamikaze lovers cause havoc on the home front

YOUR leader on the People's court martial (April 9) was not quite as distorted as Sally Weale's article (Military affairs, G2, April 7) claiming that "women's sexuality" was on trial, yet it still ducked the central issue: whether the Army is right to ban adulterous relationships within the military. You even demand: "Why should women sign up for an employer who will prosecute them for sexual activities which are perfectly legal for a civilian?"

When Sally Weale rang me for background advice, I explained why the Army has always had to be different. If servicemen or women are on operational duty and unable to get home, and they find out that their spouse is having an affair with another soldier in their absence, the effect on group cohesion can be both devastating and dangerous. And if an embittered lover goes into kamikaze mode, then action has to be taken.

Sally Weale preferred her

theory of a military establishment plot to humiliate Commander Karen Pearce, yet the person responsible was Colonel People's civilian woman barrister. (In the presumably bad old days, his defence would have been conducted by a brother officer with no legal training). Sally Weale could have made very valid points about the lengths to which defence counsel should go.

Anthony Beevor, London.

NEWS at Ten's report said the case cast doubt on whether women should be in the armed forces. Surely it casts doubt on whether we should continue to allow men to serve in the armed forces? S Winter, Bristol.

So the top brass (male) turn out to support court martial colonel. Well, they would, wouldn't they? C M Pye, St Helens, Merseyside.

Bel de nos jours

Bel Littlejohn

But now that I am, I consider it my duty to pass on whatever handy hints I can offer those who wish to follow in my footsteps.

As the programme consultant on Nigel Williams's new TV series for aspirant writers, *The Write Stuff*, I've been thinking one helluva lot about what I call the whole wordy-wordy business. Incidentally, those who wish to find out more should think of applying for a much sought-after place on my next week-long Creative Opinion Forming course, in which I shall be assisted by Germaine Greer, whose duties will be largely domestic, and by the lovely Freddie Raphael, who will be conducting our special Writing for Young Kids seminar, as well as helping stack chairs, organise playgroups etc.

On each day of my course I will be tackling one of the major goings-on regularly posed to me about this whole

writing thing. The first is: "What's the best way to get started?" Tricky one, this. Shame to say, there's no secret formula — sorry! Some writers have superstitious rituals to get them started, but I can't be doing with any of that nonsense. I prefer a more straightforward approach. In many ways, I am like George Eliot and Mrs Gaskell: before I sit down to write my articles, I always make a point of donning my leotard and working out on my exercise bike for between five and 10 minutes. I then drink one glass of Kiwi extract through a red-and-white-striped straw. I slide a 17-year-old exercise bike back and forth through the gap between my second and third fingers on my right hand for exactly two-and-a-half minutes, and then I sit down on my writing chair, taking care to ensure that my left buttock

always touches the seat first. A simple enough routine, you would have thought — but it always does the trick.

The second question is easier to answer: "What makes a great first sentence?" For the answer to that, just look above. You got it. I try to begin between 90 and 95 per cent of all my articles with that most energetic yet authoritative of words: "So." It may look like just a short word, but for me it's one of the longest words in the English language, easily the equal of the overrated antidote-establishmentarianism. "So" offers the reader a sense of continuity and immediacy — of cohesive simplicity combined with in-your-face topicality — that is notoriously lacking in any other word. Particularly striking examples from my recent oeuvre include, "So, The Ulster Peace

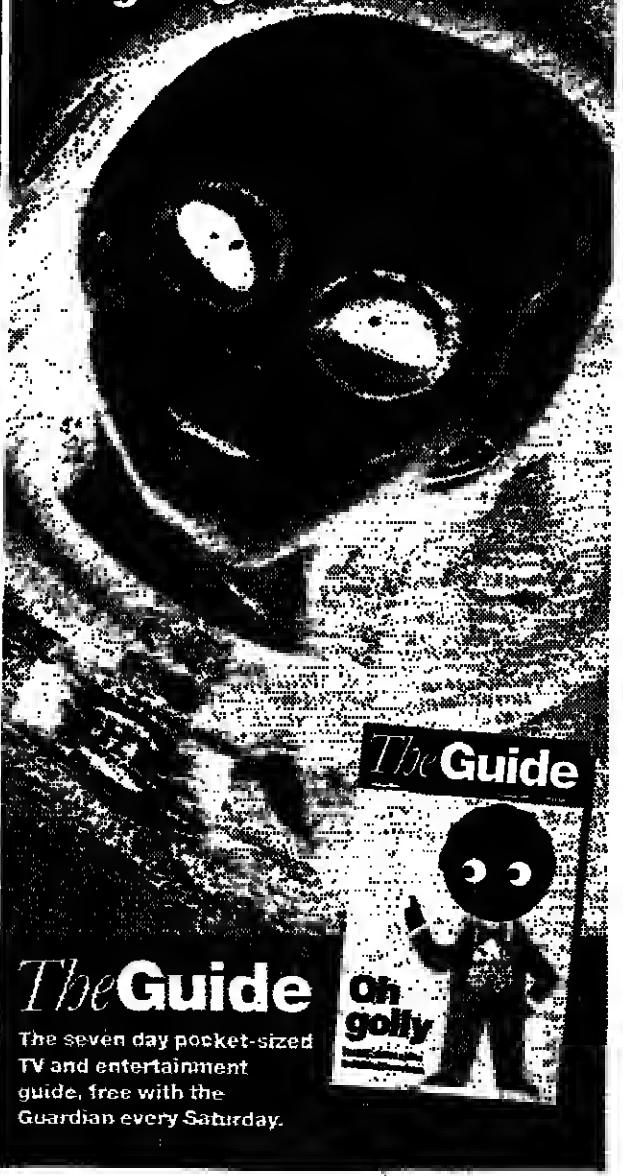
Process is on track once more." "So, The Spice Girls are Number One in Italy." "So, Radio 4 is finally changing with the times." Needless to say, my sos are now being plagiarised on all the major news programmes, and on the Scott Trust we are conducting ongoing discussions as to whether to change the name of this newspaper for the first time in over 175 years to "So The Guardian".

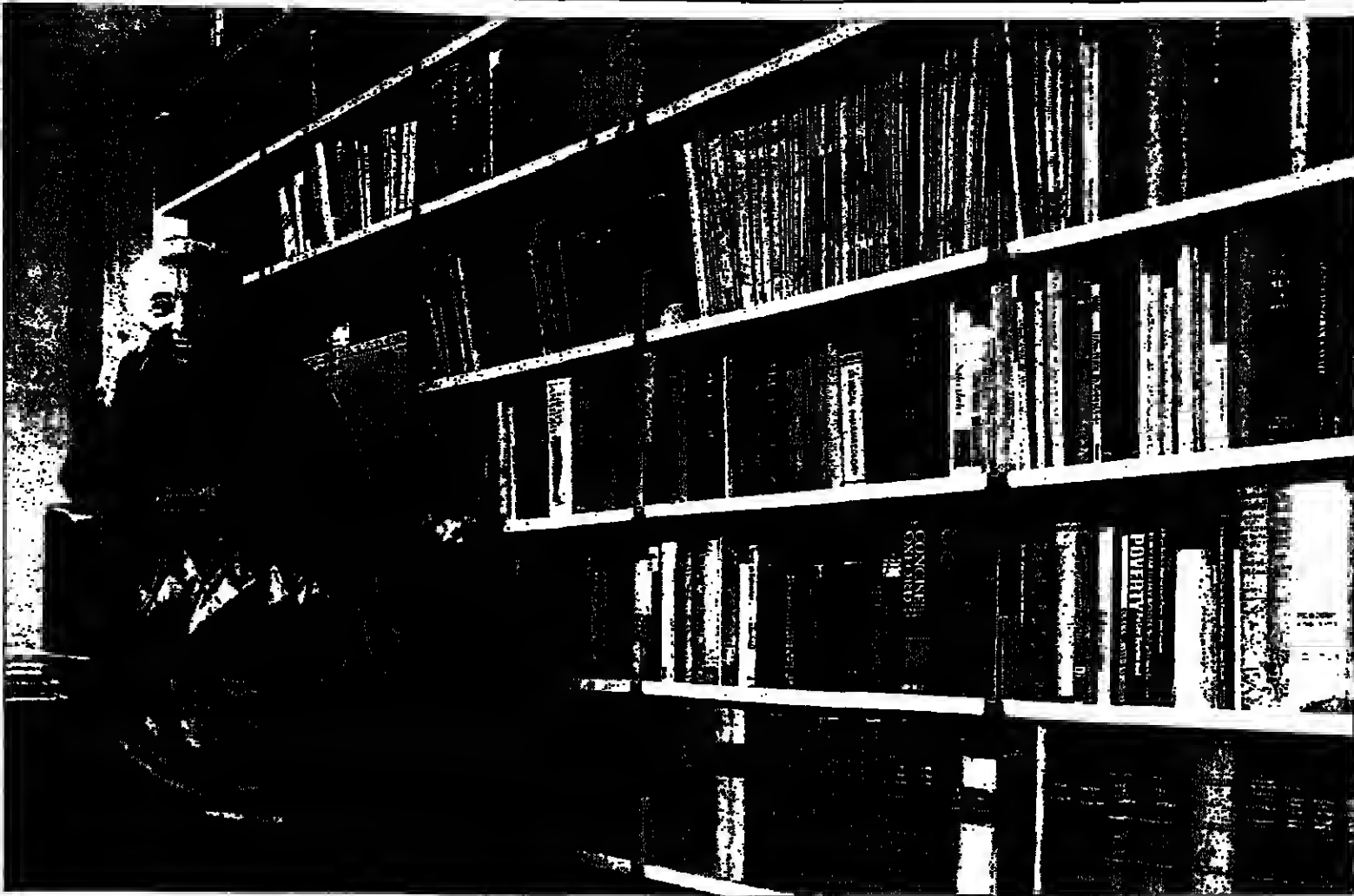
So, the third question I am most often asked is: "With so much happening in the world today, how do I form an opinion?" Well, there's no easy route, no clear-cut catch-all system of beliefs that can encompass everything. As it happens, my beliefs are largely in accord with New Labour thinking, or vice versa. Tony Blair via Alastair Campbell agrees with me on virtually everything, though I remain fiercely protective of my editorial independence.

Like many of my colleagues in New Labour, most of my opinions are far deeper-rooted than the latter half of the 1990s: indeed, their roots can be traced far back, right to the lyric-sheet on Pink Floyd's *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn* (1967), particularly that prophetic moment where the Piper sings, "The Dome! The Dome! The Dome shall never die!"

Finally, I am often asked what the commentator does once he or she has formed an opinion on a topic of national or international importance? Over the five-day course, we teach you not only how to teach your opinions, but how to glaze them too. We then pop them into the oven and bake them until they are rock-hard, ready for you to treasure forever. Of course, not everyone can end up the next Bel Littlejohn — but you can certainly enrich your lives by trying! So...

It doesn't matter where you've come from, it's where you're going that counts.





Home from home... Dada Rogers in the study of the vivid steel and glass house her son, Richard, designed for her retirement.

KEN KIRKWOOD

Dada Rogers

Architect of the Tuscan recipe

DADA ROGERS, who has died aged 89, belonged to a generation of women that was more likely to be defined by the lives of the men they married and the children they reared than by their own careers. And yet in another era she would have had the energy and the charisma to outshine them. Her husband was a campaigning doctor from a family that lived in Italy for three generations but which retained its British passports. Her younger son is a successful engineer. Her eldest is Britain's best-known living architect.

It is the strength of such matrons that shapes not just their own families but, in Rogers's case at least, many other lives as well. It was, for instance, Dada Rogers's eye

for beautiful places and beautiful things that drove her architect son to try to recreate the piazzas of the Florence that she knew as a young woman in the buttoned-up, grey streets of London. It was her voracious reading and passionate interest in science which gave her sons their quixotic delight in intellectual discovery. It was her resolute determination not to be limited by conventional responses and attitudes that allowed her, and her children, to be themselves.

And if pre-millennial New Britain is truly characterised by virgin olive oil, rosemary, and the pleasure that it takes in the discovery of the sunbrite of Tuscany, then she must be counted as having had a special place in its discovery. In the dark ages of the

British dining room: in the 1940s she kept alive a vision of convivial family meals, with simple but fresh ingredients based on memories of her own childhood, that was to transform metropolitan British culture in the 1950s.

She inspired her daughters-in-law to cook, and it is her recipes that are the foundation on which the River Cafe, on the Thames at Hammer-smith, and its even more pervasive cook-book, were built. "Ruthie", she remembered to say shortly before she died, "you should never put too many herbs in the fish."

Dada — she never used her given name of Emmengarda, which was a legacy from her father's enthusiasm for romantic Italian poetry — was born in Trieste in 1908 to a family of engineers and ar-

chitects, who lived in some style in a city that was Austro-Hungarian before it was Italian. In 1938 she arrived as a refugee in London with her doctor husband and her young son. With only the most rudimentary English, she moved from Florence to London, and then to a Bayswater boarding house.

It was there that she had to learn to feed her family on a primitive gas stove. She was always determined not to be hemmed in by the limitations of the domestic world, and went out to get a job as soon as she could. Working in a sanatorium in Surrey as a nursing auxiliary she ended up catching TB herself. She returned to an Italian sanatorium for a cure, necessitating a return journey by train back to England over enemy borders. Her

creative expression was in clay: she was an accomplished and perfectionist potter, whose work was destined to be shown in groups.

To the very end of her long life she remained a woman of quiet elegance, as well as remarkable beauty. She loved clothes — especially those designed by Issey Miyake — that defy categorisation or age very much as she did herself. Her idea of a retirement home was the vivid yellow steel and glass house that she commissioned from Richard, and his first wife Su, when she finally qualified for her bus pass.

Deyan Suddie

(Emmengarda) Dada Rogers, potter, born September 5, 1908; died April 4, 1998

Cozy Powell

The best tracks are fast and loud



Cozy Powell... 'a perfect disposition'

REDPERNS

COZY POWELL, who has died in a car crash aged 50, became best known as the drummer for some of the most prominent names in British heavy metal, lending them his much-sought-after blend of technical expertise and sheer weight of sound. Described by producer Mickie Most as "one of the best drummers we've ever had in this country", Powell played with Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow during the 1970s, and joined David Coverdale's Whitesnake in 1982.

He also served briefly with the German guitarist Michael Schenker, whose band was renowned for being in a continuous state of flux, and, in 1985, he stepped into Carl Palmer's shoes to complete the line-up of Emerson, Lake & Powell. He left after recording one successful album with them. The end of the 1980s found him temporarily occupying the drum stool with Birmingham's hoary hard rock veterans, Black Sabbath, with whom he recorded two successful albums, *Headless Cross* and *Tyr*.

Powell parted company with Sabbath amid some acrimony, but tried to keep the experience in perspective. "You learn faster by making mistakes," he commented. "If I took all disappointments in the music business personally, I wouldn't be in it anymore. You just have to

remain professional and don't think that you can make friends. The music business is a big cesspit." More recently, Powell was in the news again as the drummer with Peter Green's Splinter Group, helping the long-lost blues guitarist to take his first wily steps back into the spotlight.

Powell's stint with Green was, like most of his professional jobs, a temporary measure. His whole career was a sequence of short-lived pro-

Powell brought to heavy metal rock his own blend of technical expertise and sheer weight of sound

jects, whether it was his appearance on the 1981 Comic Relief single, *The Spunk*, with comedians Hale & Pace, or his very first job as drummer with the Sorcerers during the 1960s. After that, Powell formed his own band, Bedlam, but his, on great, tried of them, and converted himself into a solo artist.

He struck up a close working relationship with Mickie Most and scored several hits

on Most's RAK label. *Dance With The Devil* rose to number three in the UK charts in 1973. His follow-up, *The Man In Black*, went to number 18, while *No No Na*, credited to Cozy Powell's Hammer band, made it to number 10. Most said that "he was a great guy, a fantastic musician and with a fantastic disposition. We had a lot of laughs, and it was always a pleasurable experience to be around him. He was great fun."

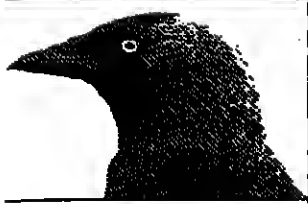
Perhaps wisely, Powell felt that there was more to life than playing ear-drum-splitting rock, and one of his major extra-curricular interests was in fast cars and motorcycles. After he dissolved Hammer in 1975, he devoted himself to motor racing for several months, and was good enough to win sponsorship from the Japanese Hitachi corporation.

Ironically, Powell's death was not at the wheel of some souped-up racing machine, but in a Saab 900 on the M4. He had been busy with as-sorted projects, including recording sessions with Queen's Brian May and with Judas Priest's Glenn Tipton, and a tour with Scandinavian rocker Yngwie Malmsteen.

Adam Sweeting

Cozy Powell, drummer, born December 29, 1947; died April 5, 1998

Jackdaw



Bloody name

THE idea of purging evil by drinking fire links the Bloody Mary in a rather gruesome manner to its namesake, Mary I of England, who earned the moniker when she turned 27 Protestants at the stake for committing heresy. Among those toasted was Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, who had annulled the marriage of Mary's parents, Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. This annulment signalled Henry's official break with the Catholic Church, but Mary's brief — albeit vengeful — reign (1553-1558) marked a vigorous realignment with Rome, which established her as heroine of Catholicism.

Mary's putting to death of heretics was an ideological triumph for the Church in

that it nullified her father's law, the Bloody Act with Six Strings, which banned such executions. The word *bloody*, as it pertains to Henry's law, is a reference to the blood of Christ and eucharistic sacrament — for this act took away the Church's right to execute individuals who denied that transubstantiation (the notion that wine and bread, once consecrated, become the body and blood of Christ) is essential to the act of communion. Given this context, it is likely that Mary I was dubbed "Bloody Mary" not because she caused the death of so many martyrs, but for her adherence to Catholic dogma.

Icon explains why Mary was so bloody

Mafia manners

THE Godfather, widely hailed as "the greatest gangster picture ever made" chronicles the passing of power from Don Vito Corleone, the head of the New York Mafia (Marlon Brando) to his son Michael (Al Pacino). Naturally, succession in crime dynasties is a delicate business and before Michael establishes himself, the body count has grown to include his bride, his sister's husband, several dozen assorted hoods and, through no fault of its own, an unfortu-

nate horse. In this country at least, it is now considered extremely poor form to conduct your commercial affairs with a loaded machine-gun on your forearm; nonetheless, there is still plenty the British business community can learn from the infamous five families of New York.

"Fredo," says Michael, "you are my brother, I love you, but don't ever take sides with anyone against the family again." Fredo has jeopardised a delicate business transaction by going beyond his remit. Michael reminds his brother that he is the chief executive and that public dissent within the boardroom cannot be tolerated under any circumstances. Having refused Don Corleone a favour, Jack Woltz wakes up to find himself in bed with a horse's head. In the don's eyes, Woltz is guilty of gross misconduct. *Fido and Fido: the Godfather way, in Management Today*

Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail: jackdaw@guardian.co.uk, fax: 0171-713 4366; write: Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Hannah Pool

Birthdays

Alan Buckwell, agricultural economist, 51; Prof J Desmond Clark, archaeologist, 82; Sir Anthony Cleaver, chairman, Atomic Energy Authority, 60; George Fyfe, chairman, Co-operative Wholesale Society, 56; Patrick Garland, theatre and film director, 57; Lesley Garrett, soprano, 43; Adrian Henri,

A Country Diary

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: Old Putball, senior Herdwick ewe of the flock and mother of many generations of sturdy twins, was clearly in trouble. She was breathing hard, moving slowly and only with great difficulty, and not grazing the lush of fresh spring grass. Her vet, tried of vitamin injection; it perked her up a trifle but not enough to give her the strength to stand unaided. The coup de grace was administered by a barbiturate shot and old Putball was soon no more.

We moved her up to the garage to avoid the indignity of her becoming an overnight feast for the foxes. I called the kennels of the Berkeley Hunt

poet, 66; Gloria Hunniford, broadcaster, 58; Prof Kathleen Major, historian, 92; David Moorcroft, chief executive, UK Athletics, 48; Sir Robert Rhodes James, historian, former MP, 85; Omar Sharif, actor, bridge player, 66; Christopher Stoddart, managing director GMTV, 48; Paul Theroux, author, 57; Norman Vaughan, comedian, 78; Sir Rodney Walker, chairman, Rugby League, 55.

Death Notices

MURDOCK, Cecil, Elizabeth, 80, born 11 June 1918. Suddenly at home, 6 April 1998. Beloved daughter, wife, mother and friend. Funeral at St George's Church, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER, 12.30 p.m. Flowers or donation to Help Hamper, Gloucester, Gloucestershire Hospital, London W12 0HS. Tel: 0171-383 8105.

Birthdays

FARRINGTON, Mita, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Happy birthday! All my love, Pam.

TO place your announcement telephone 0171 713 4367 or fax 0171 713 4128 between 9am and 5pm Mon-Fri.

Sir Charles Frank

The frontier of science

SIR Charles Frank, who has died aged 87, was one of the truly great scientists of the 20th century, a man famous for his work on polymers but whose intellectual grasp far out-reached the normal academic limitations of his discipline. A fluent linguist, whose intensity and humanity concealed an effervescent sense of humour, he made outstanding contributions to almost every aspect of physics and physical chemistry, ranging from crystal structures and lattice dynamics to esoteric aspects of sub-atomic interactions.

This area of interest he first explored during his post-war years at the University of Bristol's WW Willis Physics Laboratory where he worked with the particle physicist and Nobel Laureate Cecil Powell — and is an aspect that reveals how the profundity of Charles Frank's observations have inspired innovative lines of research.

For example, in 1950, he hypothesised the existence of a novel form of nuclear fusion, induced catalytically by the interaction of hydrogen atoms with heavy, electron-like elementary particles called "muons". Initially, the possibility of "controlled fusion" (a form of cold fusion quite separate from the discredited electro-chemical cold fusion) was thought to be an interesting but bizarre anomaly of particle physics, unlikely ever to be of practical value. Thus, the hypothesis was largely ignored in the West but picked up in the Soviet Union, where Andrei Sakharov was thinking along similar lines.

As one of many contributors to his quite outstanding *Festschrift*, the Russian physicist, L.I. Ponomarev, traced the fortunes of the muon catalysis idea. His acknowledgement of Frank's brilliance could not, however, take in a development which delighted Sir Charles in his last years.

This was the setting up, a couple of years ago, of an Anglo-Japanese research project at the Rutherford-Appleton Laboratory, near Harwell, which has already revealed that self-sustaining chain reactions in the form of a shadow of this esoteric route.

Although Frank's greatness lay in science, he was better known to the public for his work in scientific intelligence during the second world war, in which he was involved, from the late 1930s, with the late Professor R.V. "Doc" Jones. In his memoirs, *Most Secret War* (1978), "Doc" describes his first sighting of the youthful Frank in Oxford — chubby, cheerful, bespectacled and first in line to get into the scholarship examination room. Together, they romped home and, as undergraduates, shared many practical jokes, including (in 1932) the manufacture and delivery

of home-made tear gas to quieten the excesses of the November rag crowds.

Both gained double firsts but Frank took a leisurely route to his doctorate and, in 1936, went to Berlin to study at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute under Peter Debye, who, in that year, won the Nobel prize for chemistry. At this time, in many fields of research, Germany led Europe, and it was a country in which Frank felt at home, for his German was virtually that of a Berliner. In the meantime, Jones, who took his doctorate rapidly at Oxford and was already involved with the Air Ministry in detection systems, was quietly moved to London to assess scientific intelligence coming in from MI6.

One message, concerning a strange tower at Brocken, in the Harz mountains, seemed fascinating. In an enigmatic letter about the physics of the Brocken spectre (an atmospheric phenomenon), Jones covertly prompted Frank — an enthusiastic hill-walker — to take a look at forms of Brocken not in standard text books. The upshot was a sharper technical description of the radio communications tower, and its probable uses, than anything produced by MI6. This demonstration of Frank's interpretative and observational powers led, in 1940, to an invitation

radar defences, to unravel Germany's beam navigation systems, identify clusters of coded numerical sequences — which baffled the famous Bletchley decoders but which he recognised as meteorological balloon data — and, towards the end of the war, to monitor the V-1 and V-2 programmes. Together, they devised cunning counter-measures, including the misreporting of impact locations to give the German launch technicians the impression that they were suffering systematic errors of guidance.

After the war, Frank was eager to return to academic life and, in 1948, took up an invitation to join the physics department at Bristol, under Sir Nevill Mott, to work initially on solid state physics. His research base widened rapidly and he was appointed professor of physics in 1964, taking over from Mott as director of the WW Willis Laboratory from 1969 until his retirement in 1978.

This highly-productive research period bore Frank's stamp of enthusiasm and authority in the *Festschrift* by Andrew Keller, a brilliant young Hungarian chemist on whom Bristol made a lasting impression. "Physics was in the air, discussed everywhere, on the stairs, in doorways, over tea," he wrote. "The passage of time was forgotten or ignored and there was no highbrow or lowbrow. It was all an exciting intellectual adventure." This describes not only Frank's laboratory but, with some added humour, epitomises his style and total dedication to his science.

Frank was born in South Africa to English parents, who brought him home as an infant so that he could be brought up and educated here. From Thetford grammar school and Ipswich School, he gained his scholarship to Lincoln College, Oxford. He won a host of international awards, was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1954, and received his knighthood in 1977. Although not a campaigner for peace, he was a contributor and an active participant, from 1968 to 1990, in several major Pugwash conferences, and was deeply concerned about weapons proliferation and the political and practical aspects of man's impact on his planet.

A great traveller, gardener, art lover and connoisseur of the characters and delights of distant family history, he is survived by his wife, Mala Maita Asche, whom he married in 1940 and who gave him enormous support throughout his long career.

Anthony Tucker

Sir Frederick Charles Frank, physicist, born March 6, 1911; died April 5, 1998

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

IN AN article headed Military affairs, Pages 2 & 3, G2, April 7, we referred to "women in charge of two of Britain's battleships". Britain has no battleships. Women are in charge of two P2000 Archer Class, coastal training craft, HMS Dasher and HMS Express.

IN A SIDEBAR on Page 9, G2, April 8, we described a cave in Derbyshire "with fantastic stalagmites and stalactites" and added, "yes, I know its [sic] stalagmites and stalactites, but our guide got it wrong" (the one that projects upwards) and stalactite (the one that hangs) are the right spellings.

The office of the Readers' Editor is closed over Easter. It re-opens on Tuesday. Readers may then telephone between 11 am and 5 pm: 0171 239 9599. Meanwhile letters can be mailed to 119, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Fax: 0171 239 9597. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

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سكيا من الامم

Attack on yen reflects scepticism about Japanese premier's latest tax-and-spend reform package

Tokyo disappoints dealers

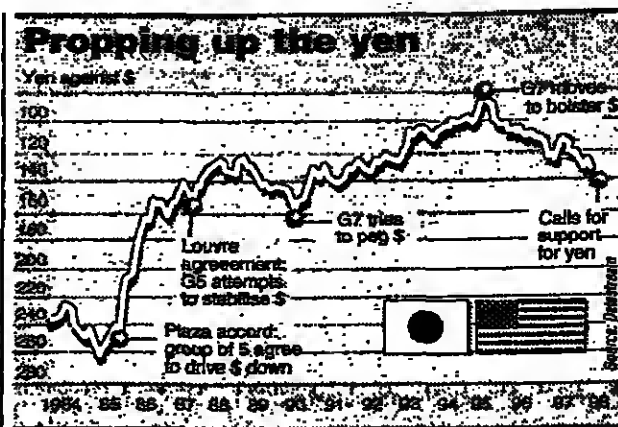


Ryutaro Hashimoto gives details of measures intended to boost consumer confidence

Mark Miller
Deputy Financial Editor

THE Bank of Japan was forced to defend the yen on foreign exchanges yesterday despite a hefty package of tax cuts and extra spending designed to boost the country's faltering economy. Market disappointment over the 4 trillion yen (\$18.5 billion) cut in taxes is likely to be mirrored by Japan's partners in the Group of Seven industrialised countries when they meet next week in Washington.

A resurgent Japanese economy is seen as a crucial element in helping to rebuild stability in Asia in the wake of last year's financial crisis. There are few signs, however, that Japan will be able to play the role of regional power house, with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, for example, forecasting this week that Japan's economy will contract by 0.3 per cent in 1998.



Although the announcement initially boosted the yen, it soon came under pressure, forcing the Bank of Japan to buy yen for dollars on the foreign exchanges in New York, helping the Japanese currency to rally from 133 yen to the dollar to 137.

US reaction was cautiously approving. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin said: "We welcome prime minister Hashimoto's announcement of steps to stimulate the Japanese economy. We look forward to seeing the details later this month. What is crucial is that Japan move quickly to put in place a strong programme."

Gerard Lyons, chief economist at DKB International in London, argued that permanent tax cuts of between 5 trillion and 10 trillion yen might be required later in the year. "This is a big package but... it's not big enough to turn the economy around," he said. Robin Garrow, global strategist at Scottish Widows, was more concerned about underlying economic integrity than the government's response. "The markets have noticed the near conjunction of Japanese economic statements with G7 ministerial meetings. This has reinforced the widespread perception that Japanese policy-makers are not themselves strongly committed to deflation and only come up with measures as a sop to their allies abroad," according to Stephen Lewis at London-based Brooking.

Greek workers strike in protest over Olympic cuts

National carrier seen as test case for reform, writes
HELENA SMITH
from Athens

GREEK workers took to the streets yesterday in a head-on confrontation with the government over plans to modernise the economy as the country prepares for closer European integration. The 24-hour general strike, the biggest protest for a decade, was sparked by plans passed by parliament to slash costs at Olympic Airways. The debt-ridden national flag carrier wants to freeze wages, cut benefits and increase working hours. But the dispute is seen as a test case for a painful programme of fiscal reforms through which the prime minister, Costas Simitis, aims to curb Greece's unwieldy public sector. "It will be our prototype for other loss-making companies," said economy minister Yannis Papantoniou, who plans to privatise 11 public utilities by the end of 1999. "Unless employees accept the cost-cutting measures Olympic will have to fold."



Olympic Airways employees in Athens lead the strike that shut down state banks and ports and disrupted public transport

Greece is the EU's poorest member. Although it has a thriving black market economy, its per-capita gross domestic product is half that of Germany. Unlike any other member of the 15-nation bloc, it has met none of the fiscal qualifications for monetary union.

What happens to Greece, a country whose bureaucracy is even more corrupt and bloated than several former communist states, will be a sign of what might await other nations now clamouring to enter the club.

Unless it acts now, Mr Simitis is worried that Greece will not only fail to join the economic and monetary union in 2001, but fail, economically, behind other EU aspirants such as the Czech Republic.

Since overseeing the drachma's entry into the exchange rate mechanism last month, the socialists have vowed to accelerate the reforms. Next will come tough measures to liberalise the labour market — one of the most inflexible in Europe — as well as radical cuts in subsidies and welfare spending.

But after seeing their purchasing power decrease by a further 14 per cent in the wake of last month's drachma devaluation, Greeks say the pace of the reforms has become far too fast. Yesterday's protest drew support from teachers, doctors and shipyard workers and halted bus and train services. Trade unions warned that, unless the government abandoned the reforms, further industrial action would plunge Greece into mass social unrest during the tourist season. "This is an all-out attack on workers' rights," said Christos Polyzopoulos who heads the Confederation of Workers, Greece's biggest labour grouping. "We've been at the receiving end of austerity programmes since 1986, we won't let these deeply undemocratic measures pass just because they're in the name of Europe."

Microsoft faces more challenges

Jack Schofield in London and Mark Tran in New York

MICROSOFT, the software empire run by Bill Gates, faced more legal problems yesterday after several US states said they were preparing their own anti-trust assault on the company alongside one mooted by the federal Justice Department. About a dozen attorneys-general are co-ordinating efforts, pooling their resources and often working in parallel with regulators in Washington. Some state officials say they fear that Washington will abandon plans to file an anti-trust suit. Microsoft's myriad run-ins with federal and state competition bodies have attracted so much publicity that bystanders may believe that the company is already in the throes of a full anti-trust investigation. It is not. A five-year battle between Microsoft and regulators has intensified recently, ahead of the shipment next month of its new Windows 98 operating system. At present, Microsoft is charged only with violating a "consent decree" it signed — without admitting any wrongdoing — in 1996. The argument revolves around one paragraph in the decree relating to its Internet browser product, Explorer. The Justice Department's claim is that, by including a Web browser in its Windows 98 operating system, Microsoft is breaking the terms of the decree. Microsoft's counter-claim is that the browser is "integrated" into the operating system — which is permitted under the terms of the decree.

Even so, the Justice Department has not asked Microsoft to unbundle the browser. What it has demanded, on penalty of \$1 million a day in fines, is that Microsoft offer personal computer manufacturers an alternative version of Windows that does not include the browser. Microsoft is not the first supplier to bundle products. But one argument is that Microsoft has a monopoly of the PC operating system, a market so should be treated differently. Another is that Explorer seems to be targeted at a rival product, Netscape's Navigator. Netscape is said to represent competition which must be protected from any abuse of monopoly power. Netscape is still the dominant browser supplier, however, claiming 68 per cent of the market, and anti-trust legislation is supposed to protect consumers, not suppliers. Another problem is that Mr Gates has become the world's richest man. Without "Billionaire Bill" the story would not command more than a few column inches. During the US government investigations, Mr Gates's net worth has increased from \$6 billion in 1992 to \$50 billion today. By the time any case against Windows 98 or 96 is decided, Microsoft may have replaced them with two new operating systems: Windows NT (New Technology) at the high end and Windows CE (Consumer Electronics) at the low end. While the Justice Department is fighting the last war, Microsoft is winning the one.

Pay and perks bonanza for US bosses

Mark Tran in New York

FIGURES released yesterday showed the US executive gravy train steaming ahead last year as salaries and bonuses for company bosses rose by 11.7 per cent, says a survey by The Wall Street Journal and William Mercer, a New York consultancy. At the top was Sanford Weill, chief executive of Travelers Group, which plans to merge with Citicorp to form a financial colossus with \$700 billion (\$419 billion) assets. His total package came to \$230.6 million (\$136 million), well ahead of the next

man, Philip Purcell of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter with \$50 million. Mr Weill's package included \$229.2 million from exercising stock options. In all, 1997 saw executives getting the largest pay rise since The Journal started compiling its survey nine years ago. The study, based on the latest proxy statements from 350 of America's biggest businesses, says the median salary and bonus climbed to \$1.59 million from \$1.47 million in 1996. Business leaders saw their total compensation — salaries, bonuses, gains from cashing in options and other incentives — soar

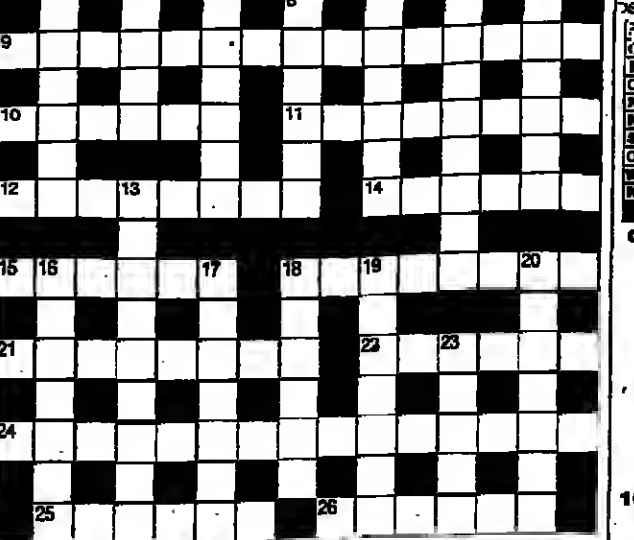
29.2 per cent, to a median of \$3 million. The rampaging bull market gave chief executives huge amounts of potential wealth. Michael Eisner of Disney, for example, was sitting on unexercised op-

tions worth \$590 million when Disney's fiscal year ended last September 30. "Even mediocre performance gets paid," said Kenneth West, senior consultant on corporate governance for TIA-CREF, the

world's biggest pension fund. Many boards no longer insist "that if you don't produce, you don't get paid," confirmed Alan Johnson, managing director of Johnson & Associates. It's "show me the money," no matter what. A case in point is Richard Belluzzo, named chairman and chief executive of Silicon Graphics in January. The silicon computer maker lured him from Hewlett-Packard with an unusual guarantee. He was granted options for 3 million shares. But if these prove worthless after four years because of a falling share price, he gets a \$10 million consolation prize.

Guardian Crossword No 21,245

Set by Janus



- Across**
- Sounds like a genuine wrinkle (5)
 - Drink by the score (5)
 - Disputed territory where secret message may be hidden? (7,3,5)
 - Standard to observe for a Zoroastrian (6)
 - Layer of fruit not turned over (5)
 - Fish food proving heavy weight on board (8)
 - Talk about metal being smooth and shiny (5)
 - Note on leading English fictional soldier (3)
 - Adage about alternative mishap? (5)
 - Where diners may be entertained by nude in show (3)
 - Mouse taken in fun (6)
- Down**
- Vessel with vicar aboard must win (7)
 - They provide capital cover for many birds (5)
 - Oriental people allowed out of native habitat (7)
 - Man from Emmaus finding place so altered (7)
 - Term for tidy trees perhaps (3)
 - Country dance (who does it?) (7)
 - Music calling for violent effort (5)
 - Managed to come up with fair share on account (9)

Live with

- 16 Bricks seen on football pitch (7)
- 17 A recluse before time changed? (7)
- 18 She wrote to the French about fishing tackle (5)
- 19 Baseball score more unacceptable in German (4,3)
- 20 French girl cast out by poet (7)
- 21 Child going to church with animal (5)
- Solution tomorrow**
- 22 Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0800 333 238. Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Service supplied by ADS

Clinton tobacco warning

ONA high-profile sweep through America's tobacco producing country yesterday, President Clinton warned US cigarette companies that Congress would pass legislation this year forcing them to pay billions of dollars to settle public health claims, writes Martin Kettle. During a visit to Kentucky, which had been planned before Wednesday's decision by leading tobacco companies to fight a bi-partisan \$506 billion (about \$316 billion) tobacco settlement bill, Mr Clinton was met by hundreds of protesting workers carrying placards reading: "Tobacco pays my bills" and "Don't tax me out of my job."

Mr Clinton tried to draw a line between tobacco farmers, who he said were growing "a legal crop" and who "had not done anything wrong" and the tobacco companies, whom he accused of illegally marketing cigarettes to children. "I want to get them out of the business," he said. He told a high school audience that America had reached a turning point in its tobacco policy and that public opinion wanted the legislation that companies oppose. "Yesterday some tobacco executives indicated that they were going to withdraw from the discussions with the Congress about legislation," Mr Clinton said. "But despite

that, I want to tell you that I believe there's still a good chance we can get comprehensive legislation this year." Tobacco companies and industry analysts are optimistic that their opposition will kill the prospects of the bill becoming law before November's mid-term elections. But Republicans have conspicuously failed to rally to the side of the companies, led by RJ Reynolds and Philip Morris. John McCain, Senate commerce committee chairman, said yesterday that legislation may be modified but that Congress would not be halted by the tobacco industry. "We've gone through the first steps, and we won't be dictated to by the tobacco companies."

Indonesian crisis takes bite out of McDonald's as it shuts 13 outlets

ASIAN economic turmoil has taken a bite out of McDonald's bottom line. The fast food chain admitted yesterday that it has closed 13 outlets in Indonesia. The collapse in the Indonesian market caught McDonald's by surprise, as the company opened nearly half of its 100 Indonesian restaurants only last year. Jim Cantalupo, president and chief executive of McDonald's International, said many of the closures were in office buildings that had not been completed or fully rented. "You're going to have setbacks periodically, and this is one of them. We're in this thing for the long-term," he said as he detailed plans for a

huge expansion in the Asia-Pacific region. The company plans to invest \$1.5 million (\$900 million) to open 2,000 new outlets over the next three years — 44 per cent of the existing number of restaurants. McDonald's has become increasingly dependent on its foreign outlets and 50 per cent of earnings now comes from this sector. Intense competition in the American market has cut profit margins at its 28,380 eateries drastically. McDonald's built 85 per cent of new stores last year on foreign soil — a significant number of those in Asia and half of the company's busiest restaurants are located in the Asia-Pacific region.

Tough rules cut dole queue

Charlotte Denney
and Mark Atkinson

TOUGH new rules for benefit claimants may have slashed the dole queue by as much as 200,000 in the past 18 months, says the Office for National Statistics.

Stricter means-testing disqualified a small number, but the majority of those knocked off the count should not have been claiming benefit — they already had jobs or were not "actively looking for work".

The Jobseekers Allowance, which the previous govern-

ment introduced to replace the Unemployment Benefit in October 1996, ushered in compulsory job-search and interviews with the Employment Service. It also reduced the period of entitlement to non-means tested assistance for the unemployed from 12 to six months.

In an article published yesterday, the ONS estimates that 15,000 to 20,000 genuine job-hunters lost their entitlement to benefit as a result of the change to means-testing rules. The rest, it says, appear to be deterred by the prospect of being found out claiming while working or not putting

any effort into finding a job. "It certainly seems to have scared off some people who shouldn't have been on the count," says an ONS source.

The statisticians calculated the figure by comparing the difference between the fall in the number of people claiming unemployment benefit and the fall in the Labour Force Survey, which measures the numbers looking for work, irrespective of whether they are claiming benefit.

The survey measure has fallen much more slowly than the claimant count. Between summer 1996 and spring 1997 the claimant count fell by

440,000 while the survey fell by 220,000. The ONS suggests that the introduction of the JSA accounts for between 100,000 to 200,000 of the difference between the falls in the two measures. "A relatively small part of this, around 15,000 to 20,000 is accounted for by the change in benefit rule administration."

"The remainder is thought to have arisen from the impact of the JSA on the way these rules were applied and the removal of significant numbers of employed and inactive claimants from the claimant count."

A large group also appear

to have been removed from the count by tougher rules on postal claims. Since the introduction of the JSA, claimants have to live at least an hour away from their JobCentre to claim by post and the number of postal signers has dropped from 120,000 to 30,000.

Record falls in the headline unemployment rate after the introduction of the JSA prompted scepticism among City analysts on whether it reflected a genuine drop in the numbers out of work. Unemployment has prompted the ONS to place more weight on the survey's new-look statis-

tics published for the first time later this month.

"I'm almost tempted to write off the claimant count statistics completely," said Julian Jessop from Japanese Bank Nikko Europe, adding that he was not surprised by the size of the group claiming benefit fraudulently. "The black economy involves hundreds of thousands of people."

The statisticians will revise the claimant count down by 20,000 back to the start of the series to take account of those knocked off by rule changes. No revision will be made to account for fraudulent claimants.

Notebook

Get the lowdown on interest rates



Alex Brummer

THE fragile coalition in base rates inside the Bank of England, led by the Governor Eddie George, has carried the day.

With interest rates marginally at 7.25 per cent for the third month in a row, it is reasonable to suppose that they have peaked for this economic cycle. People looking for mortgages or renegotiating loans would be well advised to wait for better and lower rates lying ahead.

The monetary policy committee's (MPC) decision to leave well alone is, however, unsatisfactory. Central banks like to keep their powder dry and the markets guessing as to future trends.

But with sterling stuck above the DM 3 level, where it is uncomfortable for industry and — by many accounts — for much of the Government, the Bank might have been wise to shed some light on its thinking.

Under the old, discredited "Ken and Eddie" show — so despised by Chancellor Gordon Brown — a broad statement of the Bank's reasoning was provided. Even the Federal Reserve now generally provides some contemporary comment on the thinking behind its current stance.

Here, we have to wait the required six weeks, although once the minutes appear they will for good knockabout reading because of a creditable, high degree of actuality.

The reasons for beginning the task of lowering rates are rapidly starting to multiply. It is absolutely clear that the Bank of England's repeated assertions that the strength of the pound will reverse itself, as the UK economy slows, are way off the mark.

lor's effort to staunch the debate on October 27 last year. But that decision to postpone until 2002 at the earliest is responsible, if not more responsible, for the pound's exuberance.

The foreign exchange bet on the pound is a page against the introduction of the euro. While the technical conditions for monetary union have been met, the uncertainties about its progress are manifest.

These include the final shape and the structure of the central bank; the nature of the derogations made to Italy and Belgium over their national debt levels and the impact of lower German interest rates on the fragile economies of Spain, Ireland and Ireland, which could quickly find themselves with unsustainable booms.

There are so many uncertainties about the euro that the best place to be, for the time being at least, is outside. There is a view that as soon as it is demonstrated that the Bundesbank, in fact, controls the destiny of the European Central Bank and the influence of the other members will be inconsequential, funds held in sterling, the Swiss franc, the dollar and other havens will migrate back towards the euro-bloc.

BUT THIS is a long-term game, however, and for the moment sterling sitting outside the bloc and offering more generous short-term rates looks a useful place to be. If that perception were to continue beyond the real start of the euro on January 1 next year, Downing Street might well have to consider whether its economic tests about euro membership had been met after all: otherwise the economy could face a devastating downturn.

This brings us to the second reason why rates are almost certainly too high. The UK economy is being subjected to a four-way squeeze: sterling (as outlined above); interest rates which are the highest among the Group of Seven economies; a tight fiscal policy which the Chancellor likes to boast was squeezed by two per cent of national wealth between his July 1997 and March 1998 budgets and the Asian crisis.

The impact of the latter has been consistent and unmitigated. It was virtually ignored by the Treasury in its July budget, barely acknowledged in the pre-Budget report and only given credence in March.

Yet it should have been obvious that not only would UK exports be hurt, but that transplants in the UK making all sorts of microwaves to televisions were almost certainly doomed, with their parent companies in South Korea and Japan all but bankrupt.

The goal for all policymakers is to produce the soft landing, a slowdown in the economy that does not produce deep recession and surging unemployment.

The OECD forecasts suggest that the UK economy is losing speed fast for comfort and that inflation is benign. The MPC needs to take its foot off the monetary brake, and fast.



Sport bosses are aiming to get in on the game that has yielded millions for football. ROGER COWE reports



Men in shades... Tahi Reihana, Steve McNamara, Tevita Vaikona and Robbie Paul model the Bradford Bulls' new look

Cricket and rugby put their shirts on replica kit boom

EVEN as the defeated England cricket team fly back from the West Indies, replicas of their sky-blue "pyjama" one-day match outfits are going on sale.

The England Cricket Board has been eyeing the millions football has made from replica kit — as have the increasingly market-conscious bosses of rugby.

If failures on the pitch are not enough, the impending World Cup were not the ECB's only concern. The ECB's financial restructuring which has included moving its head office from Carolina to Manchester. The FA warms financial guarantees from Umbro before launching the kit later this month.

An Umbro spokesman said he was confident the FA's concerns could be satisfied.

Umbro's problems have

stemmed from its rapid growth rather than falling sales. It and competitors have prospered from the surge in sales of replica football kits, which has also brought growing profits to the clubs concerned.

For example, Manchester United, the leader in soccer merchandising, sold £29 million worth of kits and associated paraphernalia last season.

"Cricket has a very large latent audience," Richard Masters, the ECB's marketing manager, explained. "We intend to turn them into more participative supporters. From a strictly commercial point of view, that means getting money out of them."

As with football, the cricket authorities hope the clubs as well as the national team will develop merchandise income. The first step is the adoption of new names by the counties: Sussex, Sharks, Warwickshire Bears and Surrey Lions.

The marketing team also hopes that young stars such as Ben Hoddinott and Mark Ramprakash can go some way towards the cult status of "Spice Boy" footballers like David Beckham and Michael Owen.

"We have taken the first step towards merchandising teams properly," Mr Masters said. "That is

Sports clothing	
England	275
Wales	240
Scotland	215
Ireland	220
France	195
Australia	130
South Africa	105
Rugby kit	40
Other	225
Total = £1.7bn	

building a saleable brand identity and marketing it properly."

Rugby League clubs are already well down that road, and union teams are catching on to the possibilities, although the chart shows that rugby kit is a pale shadow of the sales racked up by soccer clubs.

Bradford Bulls, for example, regarded as the commercial leader in the Rugby League Superleague, yesterday opened its third outlet in Bradford. Merchandise sales have grown over the past three years from £80,000 to £700,000.

"The merchandising side of the Bulls has really taken off in the last couple of years," said club spokeswoman Jackie Butson. "We've got everything from underwear to dogs' collars and jewellery."

Many supporters will be dismayed by this rush to market, and worried that commercial considerations could interfere with performance on the pitch, as appears to have been the case at Bath rugby club.

Indeed, Bradford Bulls' Australian marketing manager, John Hunt, made clear the connection between performance on and off the pitch: "If the team's crap, you'll sell damn all."

Doubters might take some comfort from the words of retail analyst Clive Vaughan, of Verdict Research, who warned that the fashion for replica kits may have peaked.

The whole point about fashion is that things can go out of fashion as quickly as they came in. Perhaps people are already getting fed up paying £80 for a kit.

The next Rugby World Cup might change matters. "It won't be on the same scale as football, but clubs are becoming more and more commercial. They have seen the profits made by the likes of Manchester United and they want a share of it."



Angus Fraser, in one-day kit, completes his last over in the ill-fated Caribbean cricket tour

New Look remodels float plan

Fashion firm will use proceeds to establish 150 more stores

Pauline Springett

NEW Look, the rapidly-expanding high street fashion retailer, yesterday confirmed that it is seeking a stock market flotation in June, four years after dropping an attempt due to adverse market conditions.

New Look specialises in women's fashion retailing at the less expensive end of the market. It also sells a "95" range of accessories, lingerie and footwear aimed at girls aged nine to 15 and has 440

high street and shopping centre sites.

This flotation, which is expected to value the company at £200 million, will further enhance the personal wealth of Tom Singh, who founded New Look 30 years ago. He made around £170 million two years ago by selling 75 per cent of the company to venture capitalists. On flotation, his stake is expected to increase to 33 per cent because some of his preference shares will be converted to ordinary shares.

Some analysts remain sceptical about the wisdom of the float, citing current poor retail conditions in the fashion world. But New Look chairman Howard Dyer said the company's profits had grown by 45 per cent over the past five years. He insisted that the future looked equally rosy, with sales for the first three months of this year having risen by 8 per cent compared with 1997.

Mr Dyer said the company planned an ambitious expansion programme, which it intends to kick off with £50 million of the proceeds of the flotation. The rest of the flotation proceeds will be used to help pay off group debt.

The expansion will involve the addition of 150 stores over

the next five years, giving the company an extra 450,000 square feet of selling space.

Mr Dyer acknowledged that fashion is notoriously unpredictable but insisted New Look could cope with unexpected shifts in demand. "We set it wrong all the time," he said, explaining that the company orders small quantities of all products and re-orders those which sell well. Poor sellers are discounted and not re-ordered.

For instance, the company has recently re-ordered a current best seller, a lacey black dress which retails for £29.99. By contrast a marble-printed denim skirt which has not sold well has been reduced from £17.99 to £14.99.

Lloyd's List publishing group seeks £67m from share offer

Pauline Springett

LLP, the former publishing arm of the Lloyd's of London insurance market, is to be floated next Friday with a price of 285 pence per share, valuing the company at £137.5 million, 67 per cent more than LLP's management paid for the company two years ago.

The four senior directors, including the chief executive David Gilbertson and chairman Stuart Wallis, will retain 4.4 per cent of the shares, worth around £6 million. LLP staff will each receive around £10.3 billion during that two-year period.

world's oldest newspaper. But it also produces specialist magazines and owns an electronic database of maritime information.

The offering is expected to yield net proceeds of £87.4 million.

"Flotation is the next stage of LLP's development, to continue the growth of the group since the management buyout," said Mr Gilbertson. "LLP is in a good position to expand into new business and geographic areas."

He added that LLP had focused on reducing costs and improving efficiency since the management buyout.

Profits nearly doubled to £10.3 billion during that two-year period.

News in brief

Bentley, Rolls sales drop

Sales of Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars fell by 45 per cent in the first quarter of this year. The drop — from 446 to 251 — was attributed to potential buyers waiting the introduction of new models. The £155,000 Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph was launched last month and the Bentley Arnage is expected to be unveiled shortly.

Vickers has agreed to sell its Rolls-Royce Motor Cars subsidiary to BMW for £240 million but rival bidder VW hopes to halt the deal.

Cadbury treats

Cadbury Schweppes paid its board huge bonuses last year, more than doubling some directors' pay. The biggest bonus went to John Brock, the American in charge of the US drinks arm. Dr Pepper 7-Up: £264,000 on top of his £241,000 salary, a

total of £228,000 when other perks were included. A total of £1.3 million in bonuses was shared between five directors after a year in which earnings per share rose by 9 per cent.

Paper launch

Conrad Black, whose company Hollinger controls the Telegraph titles in the UK, the Chicago Sun-Times and the Jerusalem Post, is to spend £55 million launching a national paper in his native Canada to challenge the two established dailies.

Union deals up

The number of new union recognition deals has increased sharply over the past six months, says a TUC survey, as employers have become more willing to deal with unions in advance of the Government's planned legislation for recognition. New agreements to negotiate with unions on pay and conditions covered more than 70,000 workers.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELL	
Australia 2.47	Germany 2.987
Austria 20.30	Greece 322.35
Belgium 61.55	Hong Kong 12.58
Canada 2.22	India 68.01
Cyprus 0.57	Ireland 1.1831
Denmark 11.44	Israel 6.117
Finland 6.1480	Italy 2.988
France 6.598	Malaysia 6.186
	Malta 0.8497
	Netherlands 3.498
	New Zealand 2.67
	Norway 12.42
	Portugal 204.76
	Saudi Arabia 6.15
	USA 1.8345
	Singapore 2.85
	South Africa 8.22
	Spain 167.12
	Sweden 13.04
	Switzerland 2.6
	Turkey 335.610
	USA 1.8345

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